Stourbridge
CHRONICLE

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Dance group receives councillor's backing for bid

SAVING CHURCH IS 'GREAT NEWS'

REPORT BY CLARE BUTLER

A CHURCH that closed earlier this year is still on track to be brought back to life by campaigners – being hailed as a boost for the town centre.

St John's United Reformed Church in Stourbridge went on the market this spring after it shut following its final service in January.

Now dance academy Danse Vivante said plans are still in place for the group to use their 'funds and love' to turn the historic building into a community space.

Councillor Nicolas Barlow, who represents the Wollaston and Stourbridge Town ward, said he hoped that the site would have a 'long and successful' life ahead.

He said: "This is great news that the building will be utilised for the purpose of a business. Its a good boost for the town centre as a whole too.

Utilising

"A lot of the time these buildings may be converted into accommodation, so it is great that they are thinking differently about utilising it.

"I am hopeful that this will attract others to join forces and then it may have a better chance of taking off in the area. I can see this having a long and successful life ahead."

Danse Vivante said plans were still in place to buy the building, which has sat derelict since January. Pippa Coley, who has trained with the dance academy for four years, said their offer had been received, despite a slight delay.

She said: "We are waiting to hear further at the moment, but our offer has been put forward. We would love to have the building."

The group says that they hope to keep the building intact, with it being Grade II listed, but there would be minor alterations inside.

Speaking earlier this year, Ms Coley explained: "The roof needs fixing but we have plans to make the inside usable for lots of different places.

"Groups such as Slimming World are also up for getting involved – we want it to be a real hub. It is incredibly exciting and the perfect building for us to expand and bring to life for all the community.

"The church is really local to us as we are based in Halesowen. We have the funds but now we need the support and awareness and the backing of the community."

PLANTING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR GLASS CONE

At Red House Glass Cone, Wordsley, pupils from Brook Primary School Emily Griffiths, left, eight, and Owen Boxley, 11, dig in

FLOWERS were given the Black Country treatment at a venue as part of the region's festival.

Pupils from Brook Primary School in Stourbridge carried out the work at the Red House Glass Cone.

The students are part of the venue's Eco Warriors Club. It is the third year that pupils from the school have helped out on-site. Dudley Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "It was a delight to welcome the Brook Primary pupils back to the Red House Cone.

"They are always so polite and enthusiastic and they've done a great job of helping to brighten up the courtyard for our summer visitors. I hope that the children and their families will make a return visit over the summer to make the most of what the cone has to offer, from summer craft activities and family days to all the excitement and events around the International Festival of Glass over the August Bank Holiday Weekend," Councillor Kettle added.

BUSINESS

MP criticises news of bank branch closure

A VILLAGE is set to lose its only bank after Barclays announced plans to close its branch.

It means people living in Kinver will have to make trips to Stourbridge to access a bank.

South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson has criticised the decision, calling for an urgent meeting with Barclays over the move.

The bank has been earmarked to close on October 27.

ENTERTAINMENT

Town's country extravaganza

THE free Country and Western Festival returns to Stourport on August 19 and 20, featuring acts such as Amy Morgan, Twin Falls and Chris James.

There will also be refreshments, trade stalls and a licensed bar.

Pitches must be booked in advance at wyreforestdc.gov.uk/bookings – for more details call Customer Services on 01562 732928.

TRAVEL

Railway station car park shut for month

A STATION car park will be shut for a month due to water works.

Hagley Station car park will close from August 14 to September 14. Rail-users are advised to use Kidderminster or Stourbridge. Trains will continue to serve Hagley during this time but work by Severn Trent Water means there will be no parking.

London Midland's head of Snow Hill services, Brenda Lawrence, said: "Severn Trent Water has six months of work to improve the sewerage system."

INSIDE

HELPING NEXT GENERATION

PAGE 4

A Summer offer to put others in the shade

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Postcode lottery on life expectancy

Maybe enjoy sightseeing walk

LONG-TERM unemployment, rates of diabetes, proportions of obese children and life expectancy; when it comes to your health in the West Midlands and Staffordshire, it is a lottery depending on where you live.

Live in Dudley and you are likely to be among the 53.5 per cent of people who are physically inactive. Reside in Wolverhampton and Sandwell and you are twice as likely as to be unemployed long-term than those in Staffordshire.

While if you live in Walsall, you are more likely to have diabetes than anywhere else in Black Country. The information comes from health profiles for each area published by Public Health England.

They show an inequality in health depending where people live.

To tackle this, Public Health England has come up with local priorities for each area.

In Dudley, where life expectancy for men ranged almost 10 years across the borough, seven years for women, the council has been tasked with encouraging a healthy weight for residents and reducing the impact of poverty.

Dudley councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "There are some positives in the report and some areas to work on.

"There are a number of areas we are already focussed on including improving health in pregnancy, encouraging healthy weight in children and have initiatives in place such as the Daily Mile in schools and partnership working to encourage breast feeding."

The picture is better in Staffordshire where long-term unemployment is below the national average, as is children in low income families and violent crime.

Diamond Bus owner in £1m takeover deal

ROTALA, the owner of Black Country-based Diamond Bus, is spending £1 million on the takeover of Stourbridge firm Hansons.

A second £1m takeover deal, for an unnamed bus company in Manchester, is "at an advanced stage of negotiation", says Rotala, while a pair of deals worth a total of £6.8m are also in the offing.

The Hansons deal will see the Stourbridge firm's buses and operations move to nearby Rotola depots and the Hansons' depot in Hayes Lane, Lye, will be sold off.

Rotala is paying £575,000 to Hansons' owners and the rest of the £1m will be used to pay for "necessary working capital and capital expenditure associated with the acquisition".

Hansons has assets of around £400,000 and generated £2m in revenue and £1.1m in gross profits in the year to the end of March.

Transfer

The firm started life back in the early 1980s as a driver training operation originally based in Wordsley, near Stourbridge. It was established by Margaret Hanson who had continued to run the business with her daughter Louise until the sale.

It had transformed into a coach operator and then a bus business with around 25 vehicles. Hansons' bus operations are continuing as normal following the takeover.

Around 50 people work at the business and Rotala says the plan is to transfer them all across with no redundancies. Consultation with staff started on Friday and they will move to Rotala depots at Kidderminster or Tividale.

Rotala, which is based in Tividale, says the deal makes it the second biggest bus operator in the West Midlands after National Express.

The group has also announced the sale of 5.8 million new shares to raise £2m to fund the takeover.

Hickory's rises from the ashes

Managers and members of staff celebrating the reopening of the site

LESS than a year after being hit by a devastating fire a popular restaurant is now back in business – and with a new look inside and out.

Customers have returned to the rebuilt Hickory's Smokehouse, in Kidderminster Road, Wall Heath, with bosses saying they have been overwhelmed by local support.

The interior resembles a wild west bar, with wooden decking, balconies and old-fashioned barrels making up the decor.

Bosses say they have enjoyed a great start and have thanked the public for all the support shown in helping them to get up and running again.

General manager Adam Thompson said: "We have had a cracking start. We have been overwhelmed by the support that has been shown."

The exterior has been painted in a cream and dark green colour. The roof is thatched, adding to the old-fashioned theme that the designers of the build had envisioned.

The restaurant, on Kidderminster Road in Wall Heath, was virtually destroyed in the blaze last August. Restaurant bosses have described the refurbishment as being like 'a real phoenix rising from the ashes'.

Paula Brown, community manager for the venue, said: "We just want to welcome everyone back."

The fire on August 25 was the result of an electrical fault in the fridge. A total of 15 fire crews were called to tackle the blaze.

Step closer for work on proposed Metro route

WORK towards a proposed metro route between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill has taken a step forward.

Environmental works have started and fencing has been put in place on the multi-million pound route, the Midland Metro Alliance confirmed on social media.

The seven-mile line will run along part of the former South Staffordshire railway from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill town centre with 17 stops, including at the DY5 Enterprise Zone at the Waterfront, Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Dudley Bus Station, and at Castle Hill for the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Castle.

Construction is set to start in 2019 with the line opening to passengers in 2023. Trams will run up to every six minutes during busy periods.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, who recently met with Chris Grayling to secure the multi-million pound funding for the project which has been more than a decade in the making, said the work was 'a welcome sight'.

Other extensions to Wolverhampton railway station and the planned high-speed two station at Curzon Street in Birmingham are also in the pipeline.

Meerkats enjoy new sand at zoo

MEERKATS at a Black Country attraction are enjoying bucket loads of fun after more sand was delivered for their enclosure.

Zookpeers at Dudley Zoo mixed in mealworms with the sand and filled buckets to make sandcastles around the enclosure.

Assistant curator Jay Haywood said: "The meerkats immediately dived into the sandcastles to find the treats hidden inside.

"Meerkats are excellent diggers and have very long claws which help them.

"They typically dig underground, but this is also a fun way for visitors to see them at work. The sandcastles only lasted seconds, but at least they did the sand spreading across the floor for us, which saved us a job!"

Multi-sports at centre sessions

NEW activity sessions which will include zorbing and dodgeball will run throughout this month at Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge.

Other activities will include football, netball and cricket. Booking is advisable.

Man grew cannabis plants after losing job

A MAN who decided to grow cannabis for a living after being made redundant has been spared a prison sentence.

Police found 28 plants being grown by Craig Faulkner when they visited his home on an unrelated matter, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

"He told police he did not smoke cannabis and had become engaged in the operation to make money," Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting, said.

The 32-year-old defendant turned to crime after losing his job of delivering and installing garden sheds, it was said.

Stupid

Mr Rupert Jones, defending, said: "He then made the stupid decision to grow cannabis to earn money.

"It was a means of retaining an ongoing income but was not going to make him rich."

Faulkner had featured in a case involving the possession of drugs the day before the cannabis farm was discovered in Adelaide Street, Brierley Hill, on March 29, the court was told.

Faulkner, now of Eddy Road, Kidderminster, pleaded guilty to producing cannabis and was given a 12-month jail sentence suspended for 18 months.

He was ordered to do 100 hours' unpaid work and pay £400 towards the cost of the case.

Police officers to have spit hoods

SPIT hoods will be introduced for 4,500 West Midlands Police officers from October.

The force said its staff were spat at 231 times last year and the lightweight mesh hoods would be used to protect officers and prevent the spread of disease.

The equipment will be issued to officers after they have completed training, and will be used only on suspects who have spat or threatened to spit.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said he expected spit hoods to be used 'on few occasions'. "We want to protect our officers during their duty to keep us safe against those people they come in contact with," he added.

Nurses shortage

BOSSES at the trust which runs Russells Hall Hospital say they are struggling to recruit nurses. A plan has been drawn up which has resulted in the Dudley Group NHS Trust paying more for agency staff.

Barber shop floor worth every penny

Brett Davies with penny floor at BS4 Barbers

PENNY for your thoughts? A new Black Country barber shop has taken that saying to a whole new level by creating their floor out of 70,000 pennies.

The eye-catching floor at BS4 in Louise Street, Lower Gornal, took a week of 16-hour days to make as part of a three-and-a-half month renovation project.

The shiny shop floor, made entirely out of 1p coins, adds up to £700. The unique creation has gone on to gain fame online – with pictures being shared worldwide on sites such as LADBible – even grabbing the attention of Fast and Furious star Tyrese Gibson.

Shop owner Brett Davies said he has been amazed by the response. He said: "I had seen the idea on the internet and thought it would look really cool in the barber shop. But we thought it would take so long so thought it would be better to stick to vinyl – until we changed our minds at the last minute.

"It took a lot of hard work and 16 hour days – but we were so pleased with the end result and it brought us a lot of business too."

Several banks in the area had to exchange money for the pennies, before they were individually stuck down with adhesive. The shop name BS4 has also been carved into the floor made out of pennies.

Brett added: "There's lots of quirky bits to spot if you look carefully. I've added my children's names in and plastic penny tokens too. Our customers are blown away when they see it."

Father: We're no closer to the truth on Natalie

FOURTEEN years after the disappearance of Natalie Putt, her devastated family are still no closer to learning the truth about what happened.

Natalie went missing from near her home in Upper Gornal 14 years ago.

Now, a short video has been produced outlining the mystery, in an effort to keep the case fresh in people's minds. It has been backed by Natalie's family, desperate for closure in a case which destroyed their lives. Despite police and Crimewatch appeals, Natalie, who was aged 17 when she went missing, has never been found.

Last month, police confirmed the disappearance was being treated as a murder investigation after new information came to light. 'Credible' new information led police to exhume graves at Ruiton Cemetery, near her home.

Officers said 'at least two people' knew why police had chosen the cemetery, calling for them both to come forward.

Yielded

But the case went cold again after the graveyard search yielded no clues.

The editor of our sister paper the Express & Star – who are behind the campaign, Keith Harrison, said: "This case involving the disappearance of a young girl is one of the most disturbing cases in recent decades and we share the family's distress over what happened to her.

"Someone knows what happened and, like the family, the Express & Star will not rest until we get answers over her disappearance. I'd urge anyone with information to call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

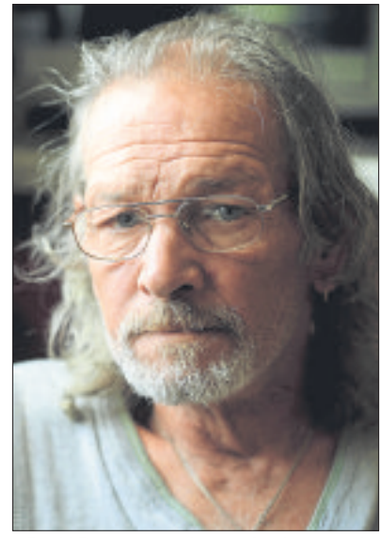
In June, Natalie's father David broke his 10-year silence, giving an interview with the Express & Star on the latest development in the police investigation.

Mr Putt, aged 60, from Wolverhampton, said: "I am still in limbo, I still do not know any more than I did 14 years ago. I don't feel any better from day to day. I feel a lot worse, the fact it has turned into a murder inquiry makes it much worse."

Natalie had given birth to her son, Rhys, 11 weeks before going missing.

To see the video go to expressandstar.com

Natalie went missing in Upper Gornal 14 years ago



David Putt wants to know what happened

Huge delays as roadworks cause chaos

COMMUTERS faced traffic chaos as the first days of major roadworks caused huge tailbacks.

Drivers faced delays of more than half an hour, with the roadworks scheme on the M5 between junctions 1 and 2 for West Bromwich and Oldbury also impacting on the Birmingham New Road, where delays stretched back to Tividale.

The project to repair Oldbury viaduct has stepped up a gear, with a contraflow system now in place. All traffic has been moved onto the northbound carriageway between junctions 1 and 2, with two lanes running in each direction. The motorway has also been cut to two lanes from Junction 3 at Halesowen to limit the amount of vehicles approaching the roadworks zone.

The scheme is due to last until the end of next year and motorists have been warned to avoid the area if possible.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brazen thieves in raid on shed

BRAZEN thieves stole two padlocks, two lawnmowers and a drill from a shed.

They targeted the outbuilding at the back of a home in St Kenelm's Road in Romsley, near Halesowen, in the early hours of Saturday morning.

Police said crooks stole two heavy duty padlocks that were on the shed, as well as a Hayter sit-on mower, a Mansfield lawn mower and a Dremel drill before making off.

The incident occurred between midnight on Friday and noon on Saturday.

Anyone with any information should call West Mercia Police on 101.

Viewers can make impression on TV

VIEWERS of digital TV station Made in Birmingham could see their faces on their own television screen with its new Facebox competition.

The channel, which also serves the Black Country, is looking for up to 20 members of the public to feature in its new channel idents – a short sequence between programmes to identify the channel – that will see the winning viewer's photo included in a range of animated city scenes.

For more details on how to get involved and be featured visit www.madeinbirmingham.tv/facebox

Green fingered volunteer awards

VOLUNTEERS who help look after parks, allotments and other green spaces have been honoured at an awards evening.

Seven groups were presented with glass awards at The Great Green Get Together, held inside the Walled Garden at Wollescote Park, Stourbridge.

The awards are a celebratory event to thank volunteers at Dudley Council-owned parks. They were presented by Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, and chief officer for environmental services Matt Williams.

Friends group want nature reserve open

A FRIENDS group has been set up in a bid to protect an area of green space which residents say has been neglected and blighted by anti-social behaviour.

The field borders Roundhouse Road, Sandstone Close and The Holloway in Lower Gornal and people living nearby are calling for action.

Group member Anne Nicholls said it would focus on preserving the fields and turning it into a nature reserve.

COUNTY NEWS

Four in five happy with rail journey

MORE than four in five rail passengers in the West Midlands are satisfied with their journeys, according to a new survey.

Some 92 per cent of users said they were satisfied with Virgin Trains' service and 84 per cent with London Midland – slightly higher than the national average.

Overall 83 per cent of people were satisfied with their last train journey according to Transport Focus' spring survey of 27,000 passengers.

This is an increase of three per cent compared with the same period last year and is the joint-highest figure since autumn 2012.

More students are proving first class

UNIVERSITIES across the West Midlands have seen a rise in the number of students gaining first class degrees.

Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency found that the University of Wolverhampton has seen the biggest rise in figures.

In 2010/11, 10.3 per cent of students gained first class honours and that has now risen 13.8 per cent in 2015/16, with 24 per cent of students making the grade.

Across the UK the proportion of first class degrees being handed out has soared, with a third of institutions now grading at least one in four with a top honour.

Snap to it and join photo challenge

YOUNG people are being urged to get snapping during the school holidays and enter their photos into the RSPCA's Young Photographer Awards.

Entries can depict a bug, a bird or a big, beautiful mammal, as photos of any kinds of wildlife and animals are welcome.

For the first time there will be a prize given for the best photograph taken on a mobile phone. The deadline for entries is 4pm on August 18. Go to www.rspca.org.uk/ypa/17

Authority has new director of finance

THE latest key appointment to its executive top tier has been announced by West Midlands Combined Authority.

Sean Pearce was named as director of finance for the authority, joining a team led by £187,000-a-year chief executive Deborah Cadman. Mr Pearce was chief financial officer at Worcestershire County Council for six years. He will start in the autumn.

School meal price hike for borough

SCHOOL dinner prices are going up by ten pence a day in Dudley – making them among the priciest.

The cost of school meals at primary, secondary schools and academies will rise from the start of term in September going up to £2.30 – meaning parents will now pay £11.50 a week.

The price of individual items at snack shops across the borough's 105 schools will also rise by 4.5 per cent. The changes are expected to bring in an extra £144,000 on top of the £3.2 million already paid for school meals in the borough.

Council bosses say that it si due to the soaring cost of food.

It means Dudley will be among the authority with the highest charges, alongside Sandwell at £2.30, Birmingham £2.20, Staffordshire and Walsall at £2.10.

Councillor Ian Kettle, Dudley's cabinet member for planning and economic development, who authorised the decision, said: "Research by the staff and officers showed that it was necessary. Around 50 to 60 per cent of the increase is annual to cover inflation. There is not a great increment on top of that. There will be some families who will feel it, we are aware of that, but unfortunately these things need to be done."

In September 2016 a 10p increase was implemented.

Extra time in prison after sexual assault

By John Scott

A FORMER garage owner already serving more than four years in prison after sexually assaulting a customer has had six months added for a carbon copy crime.

Robert Parke claimed his latest victim when she called at RP Autos in Brierley Hill – which he was running at the time – to buy a car.

During a conversation the 52-year-old grabbed hold of her hand and placed it on his groin while making an indecent comment, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. The 42-year-old, who immediately pulled her hand away, said later: "I wasn't expecting it and could not resist. My hand touched the front of his groin."

Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting, said: "She said to him: 'What are you doing? My mother is here.' He replied: 'Don't worry, you are not on CCTV'."

Ignored

She and her mother remained at the garage for some time after the incident in May last year and the defendant later sent her 'flirty' text messages which she ignored.

The woman alerted police after officers made a public appeal for help in tracing Parke when he went on the run while wanted for sexual offences involving other women.

Mr Patrick Kelly, defending, said: "He completely misread the signals and it was the briefest of contact."

Parke from Bromley, Pensnett had denied the sexual offence but was convicted after a magistrates court trial before being committed for sentence to the crown court.

Parke was sentenced in January to four years and four months after admitting charges of sexual assault, sexual activity and perverting the course of justice.

He was placed on the sex offenders register for life.

Sir Lenny tells graduates to 'be proud'

Sir Lenny Henry presiding over his first graduation ceremony as Chancellor of Birmingham City University

SIR Lenny Henry encouraged students to 'seize opportunities' as he presided over his first graduation ceremony as Chancellor of Birmingham City University.

Wearing ceremonial robes, the Dudley-born actor, writer, comedian and charity campaigner addressed more than 1,000 graduates from the university's faculty of arts, design and media at a ceremony in Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Sir Lenny told them: "We live in uncertain political times but in moments of great change, there are always opportunities. I hope the skills, capabilities and knowledge with which you are all now equipped will enable you to seize on these opportunities; to create new jobs, new types of jobs and to build a new future for all of us. This really is your time – so go ahead and change it."

During his speech, Sir Lenny also added some cheeky comic touches by making reference to student life, saying: "I know how hard you have had to work because I have been there myself – the late nights, the early mornings and three thousand episodes of Bargain Hunt.

"Each and every one of you graduating today has shown dedication and personal commitment to be here. You should be proud of what you have achieved and you should be proud of Birmingham City University."

Drugs man avoids jail after police find plants

A MAN who decided to grow cannabis for a living after being made redundant has been spared jail.

Police found a total of 28 plants being grown by Craig Faulkner when they visited his home on an unrelated matter, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

"He told police he did not smoke cannabis and had become engaged in the operation to make money," disclosed Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting.

The 32-year-old defendant turned to crime after losing his job which included delivering and installing garden sheds, it was said at the court.

Mr Rupert Jones, defending, explained: "He then made the stupid decision to grow cannabis to earn money.

"It was a means of retaining an ongoing income but was not going to make him rich."

The defendant had featured in a case involving the possession of drugs the day before the cannabis farm was discovered in Adelaide Street, Brierley Hill on March 29, it was revealed.

Faulkner, who is now from Eddy Road, Kidderminster, admitted producing cannabis and was given a 12 month jail sentence suspended for 18 months.

He was ordered to do 100 hours unpaid work and pay £400 towards the cost of the case.

Work placements on offer with BT

BT is offering free work placements to help young people in the Black Country get 'work ready' and prepared for their future careers.

The two and three-week courses, combine hands-on work experience with coaching and training, are open to 16-to-24-year-olds not in education, employment or training.

The next local courses are at BT's offices at 1 Providence Placein West Bromwich, from August 21 and at Network House, Goodall Street, Walsall, for three weeks from August 29.

Colin Bannon, of BT said: "BT work placements give local, young people the opportunity to experience the working day and gain invaluable insight."

Visit www.bt.com/workready

Insect workshop

A WORKSHOP to study insects up close is taking place at Hill Top Library, West Bromwich, next week. The Minibeasts Roadshow takes place on August 11, from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Duck race for hospice tops pub's events bill

THE Tenth Lock pub will play host to a Black Country Duck Race on Sunday.

The event will help raise money for the Mary Stevens Hospice.

Around 400 rubber ducks will compete for the ultimate prize, after being thrown into the canal and race downstream to the finish line at the Tenth Lock.

Ducks are available to buy for £3, which is the equivalent cost of a meal for a patient at the Hagley Road hospice.

The pub will also be running free family fun day starting at noon, which will include stalls, a magician, outside bar, animal-man and a karaoke, all of which will help raise funds for the Stourbridge charity. The event is being sponsored in full by Canalside Tackle.

Pub manager Chere Griffin said: "It's something we've wanted to do for ages but never quite got round to.

"Then earlier this year we were sat down discussing everything and between us thought, 'well, why not?'. It's been all systems go since then and we can't wait to see it. It's going to be such a spectacle and let's hope we raise loads of money for the fantastic work of the Hospice and the families they support."

Ducks can be bought at Tenth Lock, Canalside Tackle or marystevenshospice.co.uk

Hospice launches online goods page

A HOSPICE has launched a Facebook page for bargain hunters and project lovers, looking for furniture in need of a little bit of TLC.

Stourbridge-based Mary Stevens Hospice created 'MSH Upcycling' last week. It will help the hospice raise funds through the sale of end-of-line items which can no longer be sold in charity shops across the region, but are still of sufficient quality to be of value to someone in the community.

None of the items on the page have set prices as hospice staff will consider any offers. The money raised will contribute to the care of local families battling the impact of life-limiting illness, at the Hagley Road Hospice.

The page can be found at https://www.facebook.com/mshupcycling/

Brass band plays

A BRASS band will be performing at a Black Country park this weekend.

The free concert, featuring the Black Country Brass, takes place Himley Hall, in Dudley, from 2.30 to 5pm on Sunday.

Town fair is no fun for shop owner

Andrew Hill, outside his shop in Dudley

THE owner of a furniture shop is protesting over a funfair held outside his business – which he claims will hit sales.

Andrew Hill, who runs Discount Suites and Beds in Oakeywell Street, Dudley, says the fair on a council car park outside his shop will hit his business by 90 per cent.

He says the amount of customers he gets drop during that time. The fair is set to start today. But council leaders have hit back at Mr Hill's claims, which they say are 'unjustified'.

Mr Hill said: "Dudley Council has allowed the fun fair to go ahead on the car park directly in front of my shop.

"The funfair normally runs for two weeks and in that time my sales are affected around 80 to 90 per cent.

"The fair has been held for the last two years and I have been protesting against it, but Dudley Council doesn't seem to care."

His shop is next to Flood Street car park, near to Cousins, which is where the funfair is held.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, the Labour spokesman for planning and economic development at Dudley Council said: "I think we had this issue last year. I don't think it is justifiable. The funfair does not block off his store. The funfair attracts more people to the town centre, where they can also go and shop.

Dudley Council owns the land and allows businesses and companies to use it by paying a fee.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "We were made aware of Mr Hill's feelings and asked him to write to us. Unfortunately, we never heard from him."

£3m park revamp 'to be enjoyed for years'

A SENIOR councillor says families will be able to enjoy a Black Country park for generations following the completion of a £3 million restoration project.

Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge has undergone a major three-year facelift after cash was secured from the Heritage Lottery.

A raft of improvements have been carried out at the park, including repairs to the historic entrance gates, the war memorial, bandstand and Heath Pool, as well as the creation of a new cafe and toilet facilities.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, environment boss at Dudley Council, hailed the changes. She said: "I know this historic park very well and I am extremely pleased to see the work which has been undertaken there.

"I believe that this park restoration project will ensure that generations of visitors will be able to enjoy the splendour of Mary Stevens Park for years to come, making use of the many facilities at this important heritage site.

Energy

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who tirelessly donate their time and energy to the continued success of this park."

Dudley Council has produced a film showing the changes to the park, available to view on its YouTube channel. The authority is keen to organise more events at the park to ensure it is used by a greater number of people.

A heritage ranger has been appointed to deliver a programme of activities. A £2.6 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund allowed the revamp to go ahead.

The metal entrance gates, which had long been in need of repair were lifted out of place and taken away to be repaired.

The Grade II-listed bandstand saw parts of its original ironwork replaced and the Stourbridge coat of arms plaques installed and a new power supply laid. The steps were also replaced with dwarf brick walls topped with sandstone – in keeping with the original look

Ace idea for serving up free tennis

Tennis for Free chief executive Paul Jessop, left – with one of its founders James Perrin

WIMBLEDON may be over, but one charity is determined to make sure tennis is seen as more than just a two-week fad.

Tennis for Free, which was founded back in 2003, is keen to get more people playing. On top of this the charity wants to promote the social side of tennis – as well as the physical.The charity, which runs schemes in Hednesford, Lichfield, Sandwell and soon-to-be Dudley and Stourbridge, has announced plans to create 175,000 park players, employ 2,000 coaches and attract 5,000 volunteers over the next four years.

Founded by comedian Tony Hawks and fashion executive Patrick Hollwey, Tennis for Free is expected to grow and grow in the coming years with many more sessions opening up around the West Midlands and Shropshire.

Those interested in playing or helping to run the sessions, can visit www.tennisforfree.com

NEWS IN BRIEF

Boom in training prompts firm bid

BOOMING interest in school leaver trainee and apprenticeship schemes has contributed to a business and financial adviser Grant Thornton in Birmingham widening its sixth form work experience programme.

Students from schools including Haybridge High School at Hagley, near Stourbridge, have already been involved in a range of audit, tax and advisory work.

Kathryn Godfree, who manages Grant Thornton's recruitment programme in Birmingham, said: "We've seen the highest number of applicants for our work experience programme this year."

RSPCA warning over cat collars

CAT owners have been warned against buying 'dangerous' collars by the RSPCA. The warning comes after more than 100 cats were injured by their own collars across the UK since the start of the year.

Animal welfare experts are so concerned they have advised owners only to buy quick release collars, allowing cats to escape if they become trapped.

A one-year-old black and white cat, named Brian by RSPCA staff, was found in Brierley Hill earlier this month with his front leg trapped in his collar.

Football heroes are rewarded

VOLUNTEERS in grassroots football have been rewarded for their work. Birmingham County Football Association's annual awards ceremony took place at St Andrews on July 17.

Hosted by BBC presenter Jenny Wilkes, more than 100 volunteers were in attendance, representing a total of 18 clubs, leagues or football organisations. Winners included Tipton Youth for FA Charter Standard Development Club of the Year, Stourbridge and District Youth League for FA Charter Standard League of the Year.

Huge glass festival on way at venues

THE International Festival of Glass returns to Stourbridge and will take place from August 25 to 28.

Organisers said they were busy planning an exciting mix of lectures, workshops, exhibitions, taster sessions and family activities, as well as fantastic food and drink.

Other locations within the Glass Quarter will be involved as and when details become available nearer the time. Visit www.ifg.org.uk for details.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Electric cars can lead to problems

SHOWING that it hasn't lost its knack for capturing the public mood and getting to grips with the burning subject that is on everybody's mind, the Government has announced it will be banning the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2040.

The future, it seems, is in silent, shiny electric cars, not those noisy, old-fashioned gas guzzlers. Which is rather odd, because electric cars have been around since the 1850s, and Wolverhampton industrialist Thomas Parker was one of the world's leading producers of them in the second half of the 19th century. We're hardly talking cutting edge technology.

And the reason why they didn't really catch on was because petrol and diesel power were much more efficient. Plus you don't have to trail a lead down 14 storeys if you live in a tower block.

Perhaps we need to invest in our infrastructure a little, you know, metal slots down the middle of the road, and hand-held throttles to control the speed. Maybe a plastic lap counter in the pit-stop to see how fast you're going. Let's hope they don't decide we need to move over to electric ships and aeroplanes. The extension cables will be massive.

❒❒❒

SPARE a thought for poor Clare Balding, having to get by on £200,000 a year for presenting commentaries on show-jumping and dressage.

Clare is one of 40 female BBC staff who have written complaining about pay inequality following the revelation that some of the corporation's male stars are being paid millions.

While it is ridiculous to suggest that Michal Husain, who is still learning the ropes, should be paid the same as veteran John Humphries, the malcontents do have a point. Is Gary Lineker really worth as much as 10 female sports presenters? Of course not.

No doubt, the BBC will spend the next few years navel-gazing about how to address this inequality, but the solution is simple, even if it is not what I suspect Balding & Co have in mind. Pay them all less. If the prime minister can manage on £150,000 a year, then so can Gary Lineker. And Clare Balding for that matter.

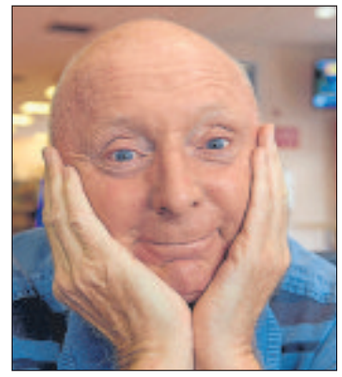
And if, as the argument goes, it means they are poached by ITV offering more money, what's the problem? I don't suppose the viewers care what channel they watch the football or horse-dancing on.

The BBC keeps telling us its role is to make unique programmes that the private sector would never provide. Fine, so get on with it. And leave the big-money, populist programmes to the private companies.

Website may say dry but really it's chucking it down

Kate on tour has raised claim that trips would be better if we had a Royal Yacht

Chancellor Philip Hammond – is he the target for the poison darts?



Jasper Carrott is due to go under the knife for major heart surgery next month

It's whether we can believe what we read

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

USING something called a supercomputer, the Met Office tells us we must expect record winter rainfall "over the next few years." By pure coincidence, this announcement came as I was consulting the BBC weather website which told me that, at that very moment, my postcode was dry and would remain so all morning. It was chucking it down. I have a lot of time for the Met Office. Looking ahead two or three days, it is much more accurate than it ever used to be. But there are times when it doesn't even know what the weather is doing now. And guesstimating what the weather will be doing years from now is like trying to nail seaweed to a pinecone.

AFTER a couple of spinal twinges, I typed "bad back" into Google and found this: "You know you're getting old when your back goes out more than you do."

THE nationwide obesity epidemic doesn't affect only humans. A reader saw a couple setting off with their plump labrador for a walk in the Yorkshire Dales. The first stile through the dry-stone wall was one of those ancient ones, made with two upright stones and a narrow gap between. The labrador was too fat to squeeze through and too heavy to lift over. End of walk.

THE successful European tour by Prince William, Kate and the kids has inevitably raised the claim that trips like this would be much better if we had a Royal Yacht. Royalists get all misty-eyed at the memory of Her Majesty stepping ashore in foreign parts from the immaculately polished Britannia. Wouldn't it be grand to build Britannia II? No it wouldn't, for two reasons. The first is that even the biggest royal yacht would be dwarfed by some of the mega-vessels owned by the global elite of Middle East princes, Russian oligarchs, dodgy businessmen and Mr Bigs of the drug industry. The second reason is that we actually have a magnificent Royal Yacht which, conveniently, already carries the Queen's name. HMS Queen Elizabeth is our shiny new 65,000-ton aircraft carrier. For the next few years it will have no aircraft and no conceivable military purpose. Let us therefore paint it white, deck it with bunting, stuff the fridges full of Pimm's, fly the Royal Standard and send it around the world to spread goodwill. And if it accidentally bumps into one or two megayachts and sinks them, so much the better.

IN the debate on gender stereotyping, I referred recently to that ancient institution, the battle of the sexes. A reader tells me his strategy is total capitulation at every opportunity. He regularly asks his wife: "What do you want doing wrong next?"

CAN Theresa May and her wobbly, minority Government survive the entire length of a full Parliament, with its Cabinet members squabbling like schoolchildren in the playground?

The Cabinet is in an unprecedented state of disarray, with malcontent members aiming their poison darts at Chancellor Philip Hammond.

JASPER Carrott, 72, is going under the knife for major heart surgery next month, followed by three months of recuperation and I feel sure we all wish this great national treasure well. I interviewed him 12 years ago when he was 60 and in great form as he unveiled his first Rock With Laughter event in Birmingham. I can see him now, leaning forward in his chair conspiratorially, as though he was sharing some great medical secret. "You know, Pete," he smiled, "we're going to be the first generation that never grows old." Time has a great way of throwing that sort of prediction back in your face. Carrott and the rest of the babyboomers have had a great time on this planet but immortality has never been part of the deal. The closest today's seventy-somethings may get to Carrott's prediction is to become the first generation that never grows up. Which, it has to be said, is better than nothing.

WHITEHALL'S plan to ban petrol and diesel vehicles from our roads by 2040, announced a couple of days ago, is presumably based on the hope that technology will deliver stronger and longer-ranged electric vehicles. At present, it takes a brave, or extremely rich, motorist to invest £40,000 in a car with a range of only 150 miles and no towing capacity. Unless we get a new generation of electric engines, we can kiss goodbye to the joys of caravanning. And what becomes of the traveller community is anyone's guess. One contributor to the Caravan Club website writes glumly: "Now you know why the travellers have kept their horses."

MEANWHILE, some mathematically-minded folk have been doing the sums on how much power recharging several cars at the same time will demand from the average household wiring system. One Daily telegraph reader predicts "Circuit breakers would pop or wiring would melt." He wonders whether every house in the land will have to be rewired.

TALKING POINT

No excuse for lack of grace and social skills

IGNORANT, anti-social or just plain rude. Whatever you want to call it, it is bang out of order.

We bring up our children – or we should – to learn social skills as well as academic ones. Good manners, the ability to communicate politely, etc. Yes the occasional swear word may creep in, especially when some boy racer driver cuts you up on a corner, but on the whole constant swearing is just unacceptable.

These social skills are so important. No matter what academic talents a person may have first impressions count, and if they are not well mannered or smartly dressed for occasions such as a job interview in most cases they should be shown the door.

Recently back from a lovely holiday in France – and I am not mentioning this because of the Brexit debate – I noticed how many of the older people, my generation, are totally lacking in social graces.

They push in, never say pardon, and do not respond when you try to be friendly or help by opening doors for them.

They give the impression that they don't want you there. Maybe they don't, but they must remember that a lot of these areas are dependent on us tourists.

Family holidays there with our children were always treasured. It is a beautiful country and having quality time with the kids was always a treat – even though it did cost us a fortune in drinks and ice creams!

But this year I was shocked by the behaviour of the young parents. Take for instance, and we saw a lot of such examples, one couple eating out in a restaurant with their young children.

Both parents were glued to their mobile phones with no interaction with the children – or even with each other. It is often said that the worst thing you can do – worse even them telling off children – is to ignore them. They were obviously guilty as charged!

And what an example to set the young ones. It is no wonder that when the children get older they will be doing exactly the same thing, on their phones instead of talking to each other.

They sometimes say that families who eat together stay together but maybe not if most of the meal time is spent staring at their mobiles. Instead show them good manners and respect, listen to what they have to say and they too will show respect in return.

It will bode them well for their future.

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Heartening that MP backtracked over flag

IT'S heartening to see that MP Ms Eleanor Smith has backtracked on her comments regarding the Black Country Flag. I have been involved in the festival since its outset.

Back to the issue of the flag, I was saddened to hear the initial views of it being racist. Much of the work I do is within issue-based community projects that often cross communities. I therefore experience first hand the work done by other ethnic groups to bring communities together. We are a long way off from being multi-cultural in the sense we all understand other's histories, cultural backgrounds and are able to move freely from one to the other.

The suggestion the flag should be a rainbow colour to signify this could only be possible if we were totally multi-cultural. That is no fault of any group or side it is just to represent something properly it must reflect what is happening under the banner.

I feel the flag not only acknowledges the strength and unity of a group of women (the chainwomen) and also men who were at the heart of our region in the Industrial Revolution. It also acknowledges the unity and solidarity of a people then and the growing integration and understanding of a region's people now.

Anyone who understands Black Country history will accept its significance. The chain can be interpreted in many ways dependant on an individual's own history.

Not for one minute do I think the young girl who designed it had any idea her design would be interpreted as racist.

DR B DAKIN (BILLY SPAKE MON)
Tividale

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle,
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51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Pete Lowe has no idea of the mess

I WOULD like to respond to the letter in the Chronicle, July 20, by Pete Lowe, whose comments showed a complete lack of understanding of the mess this country is in.

I suggest he reads the excellent letter in the Chronicle, July 13, by Mr RF Goodall.

Any anger regarding austerity should be directed at the irresponsible Labour government of Mr Blair, who wrecked the economy and left the current government with a record budget deficit and a national debt second only to the post-Second World War level.

The voters of this country need to recognise that we all have to contribute to eradicate the deficit and eventually start to reduce our national debt.

All political parties say they do not want to saddle the next generation with our debts but their actions and policies do not back up their hollow words.

MR N PATTERSON
Halesowen

Jobs need doing so get convicts to work

TWO items of news caught my attention recently. The first was the long overdue redevelopment of the old council house, and Hobbs Corner in Halesowen, though it was a pity public opinion was ignored again, and in my view an opportunity missed to develop something more imaginative, such as quality shops, books, stationary, music, etc.

The other item was the appalling and distressing state of our graveyards, and the proposal to save a 'paltry' £15,000 by tending to them twice a year. So much for the respect we afford our dead?

One would have thought there was plenty of labour available from our over-crowded prisons, and other offenders, which would perhaps provide a sort of rehabilitation towards society.

RICHARD WESTWOOD
Halesowen

Trouble to believe the train talks

ALL our transport bosses are united in their grossly over-optimistic, ever shriller blandishments that freight, commuter trains, regional and national trains can all operate efficiently and safely on the same one set of double tracks, with an odd third track where there is the occasional room.

This has frequent stopping, every six minutes, 'bus on rails' trams using the double tracks first. All this with cuttings, embankments, bridges and tunnels that cannot be widened in a heavily built up Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall and, then, onto more rural Staffordshire.

Staffordshire has their £5 million double track railway bridge built only for ghost trains as it soars over the M6 Toll, would you believe!

Why do I have trouble believing this wonderful reassurance? Of course, it will be all right on the night, you doubting Tim!

TIM WELLER
Halesowen

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War hero honoured 100 years after death

Relatives David Cooper, from Penn, and Mandy Caddick, of Woodsetton

The service is held at Coseley

Private Thomas Barratt, VC

HE miraculously escaped death after volunteering to cover his patrol's withdrawal during a relentless attack from enemy snipers near Ypres in Belgium.

Alone, Thomas Barratt stayed, killing at least six Germans and injuring many before making it safely back to his own lines, earning him the Victoria Cross. Then cruelly, he was killed by a stray shell at just 22, his cousin Mandy Caddick said in a special dedication ceremony on the 100th anniversary of his death on July 27, 1917.

More than 200 observed a two-minute silence in remembrance of Coseley-born Private Barratt at the unveiling of a commemorative stone beside the town's war memorial.

3,000 over-90s on the road

MORE than 3,000 people aged 90 or over still hold driving licences in the West Midlands.

Latest figures from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency show there are 2,750 men and 979 women in their 90s who hold licences locally.

It comes as national data showed 248 people aged over 100 still hold valid licences.

The West Midlands has the third highest number of over 90s with licences, behind Hampshire and Greater London.

Once motorists reach the age of 70 they have to renew their licence every three years and answer written questions about medical conditions and eyesight quality.

As senior citizens are more likely to have a range of health problems and slower reaction times, there has been plenty of heated debate on the issue of the safety of older drivers.

However, a study from Swansea University last year claimed elderly road users are no more dangerous than other drivers.

Professor Charles Musselwhite said while reaction times decreased, this was compensated by older drivers taking more care.

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Hospice is not closing – as £3 million revamp revealed

BOSSES at Mary Stevens Hospice in Stourbridge have assured families and supporters they are not closing after concerns were raised about its future at Oldswinford.

The hospice, which provides end-of-life care, says it had been contacted by several people concerned it could be closing after it was announced Age Concern would be leaving the neighbouring Mary Stevens Centre due to suffering funding difficulties.

Far from being in danger of closing, a £3 million refurbishment is gathering pace at the Hagley Road site – which should lay those fears to rest once and for all.

Hospice spokesman Dan Malin said: "We're so grateful for the concern that has been shown by our community, and we really are keen to reassure our supporters that – while we are highly sympathetic of the situation which has forced Age Concern to relocate – those difficulties do not extend to the hospice in any way, shape or form.

Pivotal

"As the £3 redevelopment begins, we are entering a pivotal chapter in the history of this charity, and we will continue to strive to help more and more families.

"We are well-managed, well-supported and our care is helping more and more families, all of which means there is no foreseeable reason that this charity will ever find itself in a situation where it cannot continue to help families when they need our team the most."

Chief executive Stevan Jackson said the hospice would be moving into a temporary day unit in the car park as work on the revamp steps up a gear which may disrupt services for a short time.

Searching for panto stars to help hospice

A hospice is searching for stars to fill the remaining roles in its charity pantomime alongside former X Factor star Wagner Carrilho.

Mary Stevens Hospice is on the hunt for the stars. The available roles are Dorothy, Harry, the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and comedy duo Salt 'n' Peppa.

Successful auditionees will perform at the two-night showing of the Wizard of Oz In January.

Amanda Bowen, deputy head of fundraising and lottery at the hospice, said: "We know there are stars out there in munchkin land and we can't wait to find them.

This panto is going to be something special."

Visit www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/panto-aud itions-2 or call 01384 377 778 for more details.

School is finally out for retiring teachers

Farewell to Brook Primary School's headteacher Lynn Cartwright and deputy head Elaine Bloomfield

SCHOOL'S out for summer – and not just for pupils. Several teachers have retired too.

Amblecote Primary School teacher Max Keen, who taught more than 1,400 children during a career lasting 39 years, is one of the long-serving teachers to retire.

Mr Keen, from Stourport, started at Amblecote Primary School in 1978.

The 62-year-old has seen generations of children come and go over the years – with some even returning with children of their own. "I am grateful for working at such a great school," he said. "The changes have been massive. It's now about data, percentage levels and league tables."

It will be far from a quiet retirement for Mr Keen, who gives historical talks and plays in a Beatles tribute band – The Magical History Tour.

Stourbridge's Brook Primary School saw both headteacher Lynn Cartwright and deputy head Elaine Bloomfield ring the bell on their careers.

In the school newsletter, the duo were thanked for their 'countless hours, blood, sweat, tears and relentless commitment' given for the children. "

School is also out for the headteacher of Springfield Primary School in Dudley Road, Rowley Regis. Sue Powis has retired after celebrating her last days with pupils.

New council boss to earn £187,000

THE new chief executive of the West Midlands 'super council' will be paid £187,500 a year – £7,500 more than the advertised salary.

Deborah Cadman, currently chief executive of Suffolk County Council, will take up the role at the West Midlands Combined Authority later in the year. The role was advertised with a salary of between £160,000 and £180,000.

The 54-year-old is due to take over the running of the body in September. Details of 'relocation expenses', annual leave entitlement and 'other matters' have so far been kept under wraps.

Her previous role in Suffolk came with a £170,000-a-year salary. It is £108,500 more than the first elected West Midlands Mayor Andy Street who is paid £79,000.

Publicly-available documents state: "Following negotiations the final package agreed (with the discretion provided by the interview panel) is £187,500... As the negotiated pay is higher than the substantive pay range there will be no automatic increase in base pay other than any JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) for chief officers nationally or regionally agreed pay increases. It should also be noted that there is no performance related pay approved for the post."

Police shooting is first for 17 years

AN investigation is under way into an armed police shooting in Birmingham, which left a man in a critical condition.

An officer with West Midlands Police, responding to 'intelligence' about possible firearms offences, shot and wounded the man at about 9pm on Wednesday.

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intu's cinematic vision for leisure at Merry Hill

An artist's impression showing how the proposed leisure extension at Merry Hill would look once complete

MERRY Hill owners intu have revealed dramatic plans for a new cinema and a string of restaurants as part of a major extension of the shopping centre.

The company has just bought the building that houses the existing Odeon cinema at Merry Hill and is now in talks with the chain to move it into a new building that would be constructed at the rear of the centre.

It would be surrounded by a number of new restaurants as part of intu's aim to double the amount of entertainment and eating space they provide at Merry Hill.

The scheme, expected to go to Dudley Council planners later this year, is part of intu's £100 million programme of improvements at the shopping centre over the next few years.

Matthew Roberts, intu's chief financial officer, reaffirmed the company's belief that Merry Hill could become one of its 'best performing assets' in the coming years, rivalling the likes of intu's Trafford Centre and Lakeside in Essex.

"We are very happy with the way Merry Hill is performing at the moment," he said.

"Across our estate food and leisure outlets occupy around 11 per cent or 12 per cent of the space on average, but at Merry Hill that is only five per cent. So we have just bought the Odeon cinema and as our next step we would like to bring the Odeon into the main centre.

"We want to extend the centre at the rear to incorporate a new cinema and surround it with with a lot of restaurants. Over the next few years our plan is to double the amount of leisure and food at Merry Hill from five per cent to 10 per cent."

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Hefty hound hauled to safety in Major rescue

Major at the bottom of the bank by the River Stour

The rescue under way Picture: Haden Cross fire station

IT was a ruff day for this hefty hound after he became stranded 100ft down a steep river bank.

And it proved tricky for firefighters to collar the canine who weighed in at a staggering 13st 3lbs (85kgs).

Major the Bullmastiff was out with his owner when he managed to get stuck by the River Stour, in Butchers Lane, on the border of Cradley and Cradley Heath.

The huge dog was reached by crews from Haden Cross fire station after being alerted through a 999 call at around 7.30pm last Tuesday. The fire service's technical rescue team based at Wednesbury fire station were also called to help.

His owner ensured Major was relaxed and he was laid on a blanket.

It was a tricky location for the rescue with the running water from the river coupled with the muddy bank. Firefighters then managed to get the pooch to lie down on a stretcher and strapped up tight. Crews created a pulley system to allow him to be brought up the side of the steep bank

Crew members from the technical rescue team also tweeted: "Full rope rescue job to get poor old Major, the 85kg up a 100ft bank. Good effort with @hadencrossfire."

It took crews around an hour-and-a-half to complete the rescue.

£1.2m canal revamp to improve health

COUNCIL chiefs say more than £1 million will be spent upgrading a three-mile stretch of the canal in Sandwell.

The canal towpath between Smethwick Galton Bridge, Sandwell & Dudley and Dudley Port rail stations is set for a £1.2 million revamp.

A council report says the cash will come from a West Midlands Combined Authority fund to improve cycle routes in the Midlands. According to the authority, the Managing Short Trips strategy aims to 'create an extensive, safe and coherent network of well-designed off and on-road links' across the region.

Councillor David Hosell, cabinet member for highways, said: "Any improvements that we can make to the canals – either appearance, safety or other things – are to be welcomed. This work will benefit the community in a number of ways, that can be either exercise or for seeing wildlife and nature, as well as making them safer."

Man stole 18 televisions from his work to sell on

A MAN who stole 18 televisions which he claimed were 'ready to be scrapped' sold them for more than £7,000 less than their value, a court heard.

Jonathan Hall, aged 38, of Smiths Place, Great Bridge, worked at Dreams PLC in Wednesbury, when he took the televisions between March and July 2016.

Hall pleaded guilty to one count of theft by employee at Wolverhampton Magistrates Court on July 4 and last week was sentenced for the theft of television sets worth £9,000, which he sold to Cash Converters for £1,500.

The court heard that Hall believed the TVs were to be thrown away and claimed that he had asked a supervisor if he could take them but prosecutor Mrs Val Hart said that the company denied this.

Hall was also charged with assault in relation to an altercation with his ex-partner and criminal damage to a letter box.

He pleaded guilty and was given a 12-month community order, including 20-day rehabilitation requirement and 120 hours' unpaid work. He was ordered by Judge Michael Wheeler to pay an £85 surcharge, £185 costs, £100 compensation to his ex and £1,000 compensation to Dreams PLC. He received a restraining order preventing him contacting his ex for 12 months.

Pub is making way for homes

A FORMER pub will be knocked down and replaced with homes after plans were approved.

The Summerhouse on The Portway, Kingswinford, will be bulldozed. A total of 14 homes will be built in its place after the proposals were tweaked having previously been refused by Dudley Council, which was unhappy with the design.

The pub has stood empty for some time, with developer Coyne Group stating the development offers the chance to tidy up the area and bring much-needed homes.

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'Super council' boss will earn £187k – £7k more than advert

THE new chief executive of the West Midlands 'super council' will be paid £187,500 a year – £7,500 more than the advertised salary.

Deborah Cadman is chief executive of Suffolk County Council. She will take up the role at the West Midlands Combined Authority later in the year. The role was advertised with a salary of between £160,000 and £180,000. The 54-year-old is due to take over in September.

Details of 'relocation expenses', annual leave entitlement and 'other matters' have so far been kept under wraps.

Her previous role in Suffolk came with a £170,000-a-year salary. It is £108,500 more than the first elected West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, who is paid £79,000.

Transport

The West Midlands Combined Authority brings together the four Black Country councils, Birmingham, Solihull, and Coventry to oversee issues like transport and infrastructure.

It will be given £1.1 billion over the next 30 years – or £36.5 million a year. Discussions have just started over obtaining more powers and funding from the government.

Mrs Cadman, from Birmingham, will replace interim chief executive Martin Reeves, who will return to his post at Coventry City Council. Pete Durnell, UKIP mayoral candidate, said of the revelation: "At the rate it is going it will barely pay the salaries of the staff."

A combined authroity spokesman said: "A degree of flexibility will always be required when trying to secure the strongest candidate.

"Details of relocation and annual leave remain private."

Yobs throw bricks from road bridge

YOBS were spotted throwing bricks at cars from a bridge over a main road – with a councillor condemning the 'unacceptable' behaviour.

Police were called to Duncan Edwards Way, also known as the Dudley Southern Bypass, in Dudley at 7.30pm last Wednesday, but a spokesman said police were not able to find those responsible.

A spokesman for the force said: "We were called about bricks being thrown from Duncan Edwards Way, Dudley, at around 7.30pm. Officers attended and there was no trace of anyone."

The incident has been condemned by a ward councillor, who said it could have caused serious injury.

Councillor Shaukat Ali said: "This is an unacceptable type of behaviour which puts at risk the lives of people

"People should refrain from this."

Hallelujah – church is really back on song

At St John's Church, Kates Hill, Dudley, Deb Brownlee appeals to keep funding coming in, stood at the blue Chancel screen

WHEN an historic church was re-opened after 14 years following a community campaign, that was just the beginning.

Thousands of pounds have been spent over the last year at St John's Church in Kates Hill, Dudley, as officials continue to bring it back to its former glory.

The St John's Preservation Group fought a long battle to gain control of the church, which had fallen into disrepair after more than a decade lying empty. It was closed in 2002 as it was deemed to be unsafe.

They were handed the keys last year and have been busy since bringing the building back up to scratch.

A special event was held to mark both its 177th anniversary and a year since it was re-opened. Group members also used the occasion to appeal for more donations.

Insurance for the next year will cost almost £10,000 alone. Chairman of the group Deb Brownlee said: "Now the building is almost completely waterproof, there is daylight streaming through the windows, the building has been deep cleaned and is drying out well. We really need a good supply of funds to be able to carry on work at this pace, and regular giving means we can plan accordingly."

Visitors have been streaming into the church since its re-opening.

Wagner will help hospice open its fayre

X FACTOR star Wagner Carrilho will officially open the Mary Stevens Hospice Summer Fayre on Saturday, September 2.

The Dudley-based Brazilian singer shot to fame when he finished sixth on the 2010 series of The X Factor, regularly receiving high volumes of votes from the UK public. He will enter the event at the head of a huge parade through the streets of Oldswinford, before meeting fans and officially opening the event to the public at 11.30am.

He will also be on hand to help the hospice raise awareness of their upcoming January pantomime performance of the Wizard of Oz at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, in which Wagner will be playing The Wizard.

Amanda Bowen, deputy head of fundraising and lottery, Mary Stevens Hospice Group, said: "Obviously, we're absolutely delighted to have Wagner join us for the summer fayre, and we hope that our community love seeing him as well."

The summer fayre will also include an invitational football tournament, a craft market, a fruit and veg show and various other attractions including a mocktail bar.

For more information visit: www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/event/summer-fayre-2017 or call 01384 377 778.

Mayor opens new tile company shop

A TILE company has opened a new shop in the Black Country for its customers.

Topps Tiles opened the shop at the Mill Race Lane Industrial Estate in Stourbridge last week.

Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Dave Tyler, opened the shop for staff and customers.

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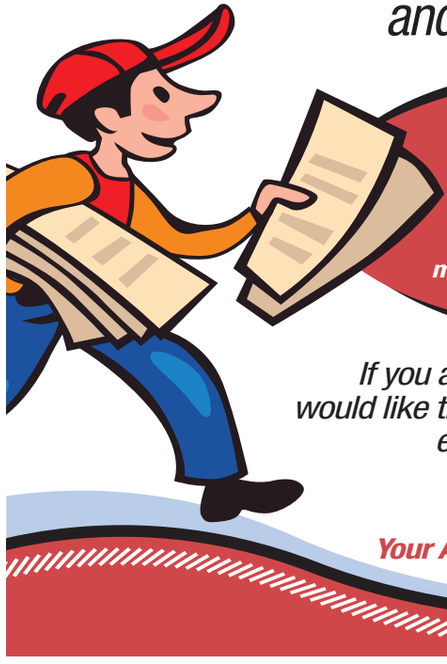

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Students experience the way Germans go to work

Staff and students from the Academy of English and the High Arcal School in Oldenburg, Germany

FROM shadowing a dentist to getting a taste of life as a physiotherapist, a group of year 10 students have completed a week-long work experience programme.

It was part of the partnership between the High Arcal School in Sedgley and the Academy of English in Oldenburg, Germany.

It was the 16th exchange visit and the fourth time students from the High Arcal get an opportunity to do their work placements in Germany.

Students worked in a range of fields and companies including medicine, law, graphic design, physiotherapy, education and agriculture.

Working in a dentist surgery 15-year-old Caitlin Hoyland said: "I was made to feel very welcome and worked as part of the team, even assisting with a root canal extraction."

Another student, Kaylem Wynne, worked in a physiotherapist and gained unique insights into physiotherapy treatment for the elderly, making more than 20 house visits in four days.

Kaylem said: "It was really good to interact with the German patients and get to see how physiotherapy helps them in their daily lives."

Living in a renovated farm house, the students got a taster of living in suburban Germany and also participated in a range of social activities.

The 17th exchange visit will take place in October when a group of German students visit for 10 days.

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Headteacher proud over high rating

PUPILS and teachers are celebrating after their school was rated 'outstanding' by inspectors.

Trinity C of E Primary School, in Wolverhampton, was ranked outstanding in all three areas in its Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

The school, which has 600 pupils, was praised for its 'distinctive character', the 'effectiveness of its leadership and management' and 'the impact of collective worship on the school community'.

Essence

Headteacher Matthew Welton said: "I am exceptionally proud of our school's SIAMS report, as it captures the real essence of our school.

"With 41 different languages spoken, strong pupil representation from most world faiths and over 76 per cent of our pupils from different ethnic groups, it is such a credit to our entire school community that everyone works together, with pupils, staff and parents showing outstanding relationships to improve the life chances for each child.

"Our governors and all staff are delighted that their commitment to our schools mission, aims and values are so evident through our delightful, confident and articulate pupils."

Football rivalry– but not as you know it

WOLVES face West Bromwich Albion this weekend, but not in a way you'd expect.

Dozens of professional and amateur Subbuteo players are to descend on Wolverhampton for a miniature football competition. The Staffordshire pro-am Subbuteo competition takes place on Sunday at The Electric Club, on St Mark's Road, from 11am.

Cuts, but we will survive and thrive, says city theatre boss

AN historic theatre facing budget cuts has revealed it will survive funding cutbacks and continue staging popular performances. Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre has been forced to change its business model to continue catering for its audiences, which are at an 'all-time high'.

It comes as the Lichfield Street venue announced it is set to host its first in-house production in 40 years, which follows its £1.2 million refurbishment unveiled last September.

Grand Theatre chief executive and artist director Adrian Jackson said the theatre was only able to secure its long-term funding by changing the way it runs.

He said: "We have made changes to our business model during the last year or so which now clearly demonstrates that the Grand Theatre can survive and thrive without the need for regular public funding.

Proud

"Wolverhampton Grand Theatre audiences are at an all-time high and we couldn't be more proud to see our very own production taking shape."

The theatre claims it is set to lose its funding by next April after the latest round of cuts from Wolverhampton Council will leave it without any regular cash support.

But staff at the theatre have united in the face of the devastating news, vowing to move forward by launching show Brassed Off in four weeks' time. Bosses at the Grand said they will bring the full-scale production to the stage from Wednesday, August 23, until Saturday, September 2.

The City of Wolverhampton Brass Band will also play live on stage during the show, which will be directed by former Hull Truck Theatre artistic director Gareth Tudor-Price.

Grand way to honour sporting royalty

Sitting comfortably – Hugh Porter and Anita Lonsbrough in the theatre Dress Circle

WOLVERHAMPTON'S athletic golden couple have been honoured at the Grand Theatre.

Seats have been dedicated to sporting royalty Hugh Porter and Anita Lonsbrough in the Dress Circle.

The plaques recognise their sporting achievements– Anita as Olympic, European and Commonwealth gold medallist and Hugh as four-times world champion and Commonwealth gold medallist.

Both Anita and Hugh have been awarded the MBE and are regular theatregoers at the Grand.

Hugh said: "We couldn't believe it when we were told about the plaques. The Grand Theatre is a jewel in the crown of the City of Wolverhampton, it's a massive honour to be part of the theatre's vision."

Anita added: "It's a great honour to be recognised in this way. The Grand Theatre is a place we often attend and enjoy visiting. Hugh was born here but this is my adopted home and we are delighted to be involved in the campaign to protect the future of the Grand Theatre."

Members of the public can sponsor their favourite seats in the Grade II-listed auditorium or bricks in the new Encore Lounge for five years by donating £250. Donations can also be spread over the sponsorship period into smaller payments.

'Haphazard' policing is slammed

A COUNCILLOR has hit out at the lack of police on the beat in his ward, slamming policing as 'haphazard'.

Councillor Phil Bateman, who represents Wednesfield North, says the area can go for 'days at a time' without seeing a policeman or PCSO.

He said Wolverhampton Council should speak to West Midlands Police in an attempt to get more officers on the streets.

The latest Home Office data shows that there were 11,437 officers working for West Midlands, Staffordshire, West Mercia, and Warwickshire forces in September. This was down from 11,669 a year earlier.

Councillor Bateman said: "Today here in Wednesfield North the community policing is haphazard, the police are at full stretch.

"Sometimes for days at a time my ward of Wednesfield North doesn't see a Policeman or a PCSO.

MP fed up with rubbish view and calls for help

THIS is the mountain of rubbish left in an industrial yard for almost a year, which prompted calls for the Government to get involved in cleaning it up.

The waste had begun to be shifted but work ground to a halt, with latest images showing little difference made to the scene which has blighted Shaw Road in Dudley.

Around 2,000 tons of waste, which includes tyres, plastic and other industrial materials, has been dumped at the Rowanoak site.

Solution

It appeared the rubbish would finally be cleared last month when the Environment Agency (EA) moved in, but it said work had 'currently stopped', prompting anger from MP Ian Austin who has called for an immediate solution.

The Labour MP for Dudley North has become frustrated by the lack of progress and said the Environment Secretary Michael Gove should get involved and urged the EA to 'get a grip'.

He first demanded action in November but there has been little progress made since then. He told the Express & Star: "Businesses and I are fed up with the time it is taking to sort this out. It's been dragging on for far too long and I want Michael Gove to get the Environment Agency to get a grip and sort it out much more quickly."

EA bosses said they were working with the landowner to try and get the clear-up resumed. Environment officer Steve Rogers said: "While our investigation into the depositing of the waste at the site is ongoing, we have been working with the permit holders and landowners to secure removal."

The mountain of rubbish left in an industrial yard in Shaw Road, Dudley

Former mayor is praised

A FORMER mayor of Dudley has been praised by his successor for his fund-raising efforts.

During his time in office, Mohammed Hanif raised nearly £37,000 for three charities. Representatives from Friends of Alfie Johnson, Diabetes UK Dudley group and Dudley CIL shared the funds.

Each group took away more than £12,000 for their own charities. Current mayor Councillor Dave Tyler said: "Being mayor of Dudley is a real honour and brings so many opportunities to meet people from across our wonderful borough.

"Most importantly, we are able to help raise the profile of charitable organisations and play a part in raising funds to help support their efforts.

"I hope that people will be as generous this year to help me."

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Town always has place in my heart

Glenn Hughes played a gig in Cannock – and told TOM OAKLEY how he is 'super proud' of his roots

ROCK legend Glenn Hughes returned to Cannock for an up close and personal gig in his hometown.

The Deep Purple star, who lives in Los Angeles, returned to the town to treat his adoring fans to an intimate evening – featuring a Q&A, live performance and meet-and-greet for some.

Cannock's Premier Suite was packed out as hundreds enjoyed a short film about his life, an interview led by ex-Radio 1 DJ Nicky Horne and music from across his illustrious career.

Speaking to the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star, he said he was delighted to be back in his hometown and that the place will always have a place in his heart.

"I'm super proud to come from this part of the world," he said.

"I've never shied away from telling people I come from Cannock. I secretly came up here in the area and visited my birthplace, going to places I used to go as a kid. It's super important for me to remember where I came from.

"I've been around all the old neighbourhoods I used to play in during the late 60s. I wanted to come back and have a look at the way it used to be and the way it is now."

Fans young and old – with some travelling from overseas – turned out for the evening at the venue in the town centre.

It comes after a difficult year for the singer and bass player, who lost both his father William and mother Sheila in less than 12 months. "I'm grateful to be home, he said.

Grateful – Glenn Hughes in Cannock

"I lost both my parents in the last year and wanted to come home at this point and see some old friends.

"My parents bought me my first guitar and I slept with it for two years. That was my new love – and that's a historical thing for me.

"I don't know how many times I'll be coming back to Cannock but I want to let people know I'm grateful for the life that's freely been given to me."

Hughes had been touring Europe promoting the upcoming fourth record from his band Black Country Communion, which is out on September 22.

A song of his aptly titled 'Black Country' is played at half-time before every game at Molineux – and he confessed his love for the club.

"Wolverhampton Wanderers is my team and always will be," Hughes said.

"You can get married three or four times, have three divorces, but you'll never change your team."

"The Championship is such a difficult league and the fact of the matter is, I'm still going to be there.

"There's going to be some surprises this year. People are talking about the Villa going up and I wish them the very best. Wolves have three quarters of a new team and they're going to have to gel and work together like every other team. They need to work really hard and realise it's not one man but a club effort."

Friends

Hughes was also a member of Trapeze and was briefly in Black Sabbath in the mid-1980s. And he classes as friends the long list of rock bands from across the Midlands which dominated the music scene through the 1970s.

"I had a report with all bands in the area," he added.

"Slade were always good friends of mine. John Bonham was one of my closest friends, and Robert Plant an old friend before Led Zeppelin.

"The guys in Sabbath – I was in Sabbath in a while. I grew in places like Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton – it's been one hell of a ride.

"I called my band Black Country Communion because I started my career around the Black Country – and I thought it would be great one day if I could call the band the name of the area I was from."

Revamped rugby club is target for vandals

VANDALS have damaged restoration work carried out at a rugby club – leaving club members in shock.

The incident took place at Wednesbury Rugby Club where a scoreboard was destroyed, dog fouling signs were ripped up and drainage pipes were damaged.

West Midlands Police is appealing for information in connection with the incident, which took place between July 23 and the next morning.

Steve Dale, who is a member of the club, said: "What happened was the club received some funding to bring the place up to scratch.

"Lots of members did lots of work over the weekend, where they put in planters, flag poles, some slabbing for new benches.

Ripped

"The dog fouling signs were thrown all over the place, a pole holding our scoreboard was ripped up and they also ripped up some drain pipes."

Around 60 to 70 members took part in the restoration work.

The club received £500 funding form NatWest, as part of an initiative set up in partnership with the Rugby Football Union, to carry out the work.

Club vice chairman Martin Brotherton said: "We are really upset.

"Wednesbury Rugby Club is a community club. It is not just about rugby, it is used by other members of the club also.

"For somebody to do what they have, after all the hard work we have carried out, is absolutely heart breaking."

The rugby pitch is accessible to the public, meaning the club often have to clear the playing field of dog foul and other debris such as broken glass bottles. One rugby player nearly had to have his leg amputated after skidding in dog mess, said fellow Wednesbury North councillor Elaine Costigan. "It happened recently," she said.

Luke Pittaway, Gareth Hughes, Ian Ray, Chris Lister, Peter Hughes, Martin

She added: "I find it very said what has happened regarding the vandalism. I would urge anyone who has information to report it to police."

Last year, a burnt out car was found on the playing field, said Mr Brotherton.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said officers have looked into the incident, but are appealing for help with new information to identify the culprits.

The spokesman said: "Offenders gained access to a sport field and damaged two advertising signs, a scoreboard post and 12 dog fouling signs.

"Police are appealing for help with information."

Wednesbury North ward councillor Peter Hughes, who is a life time member of the club, said: "I think it is terrible what has taken place."

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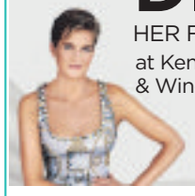

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Drug dealer caught when car stopped

A DRUG dealer drove into trouble when he failed to insure his car, a judge heard. A police patrol checked details of the Fiesta after spotting it being driven through Wolverhampton in the early hours, the city's crown court was told.

The officers thought Leonard Johns, aged 20, was trying to hide something after ordering him to stop on November 11. It turned out to be a small amount of cocaine for his own use but further examination of the car unearthed a mobile phone and £690.

Cannabis worth £12,000 together with a further £6,500 cash, two more mobile phones ans scales were found at his home, said Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting.

Mr Sanjay Toora, defending, said: "This whole episode began as a result of his cocaine habit." This left Johns unable to settle debts run up with his drug dealer who ordered the defendant to sell cannabis for him in default of repayment, the court heard.

Johns, of Myatt Avenue, Parkfields, pleaded guilty to possession of cannabis with intent to supply, possession of cocaine and driving without insurance.

He was given one year's detention suspended for 18 months with a six-month night-time curfew and ordered to do 150 hours' unpaid work.

Just the ticket, chance to rock – at the double

TRIBUTE acts for two legendary rock bands will appear at the same venue on the same night.

ACDC UK, who pay homage to AC/DC, and Sack Sabbath, who play Black Sabbath hits, will play at the Slade Rooms, Broad Street, Wolverhampton on December 2.

Both bands have been rocking audiences for 15 years each.

Mental health services for children in the spotlight

MENTAL health services for children will go under the spotlight in a new initiative by Healthwatch Wolverhampton. The watchdog has identified the topic as one of its top priorities.

It will carry out a string of projects at sites throughout the city. Teenagers and parents of children affected by psychiatric disorders are also being asked to provide feedback that will help shape how services are delivered in future.

Elizabeth Learoyd, chief officer for Healthwatch Wolverhampton, said: "Mental health services often seem to operate under the radar, but it's vital to those who need help that they're as good as they can be.

"We've been asked to carry out work on the services available specifically for children and adolescents and a key part of that will be to gather feedback from patients and their families.

"We want people to tell us about any particular problems that exist or specify certain concerns and, that way, we get right to the heart of the matter and can work to put it right."

Ensure

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) was revealed as one of five subjects for priority work at the annual meeting of Healthwatch Wolverhampton.

The watchdog will also look into A&E department at New Cross Hospital along with primary care, dentists and social care assessments.

Ms Learoyd added: "We're keen to ensure our work in the city is led by people who live here. Our priority areas for 2017/18 have been chosen after reviewing information and comments provided by residents. We have also been asked to focus on providing a voice for the young so we aim to establish a Youth Healthwatch."

Film fans in La La Land – despite rain

THE weather may have been a bit damp, but the love story of La La Land warmed the hearts of the crowd who turned out to watch it in an idyllic outdoor setting.

More than 250 people turned out to watch the film in Bantock Gardens. It was touch and go whether the event would go ahead as rain threatened to make the evening a washout, but visitors brought their umbrellas and took their seats in the Rose Garden.

The showing was the culmination of 12 months of work from the Finchfield and Castlecroft Community Association, management at the Gardens and Wolverhampton City Council.

Target

It was one of a number of outdoor cinema events held across the city this summer as the craze takes over the country.

Arts co-ordinator for Creative Black Country, who also worked to ensure the event went ahead, said: "It is the perfect film for a summer evening, fun for all the family and full of great sing-along moments."

"It has been a long process getting everything together but we hit our target in terms of sales, so it seems the idea really caught on. This was an event put together for the community and we hope that everyone who came along enjoyed themselves.

Prior to the screening, visitors enjoyed live music from vocal trio Miss Fortunes.

Anna Bamford, Gemma Phillips, Kristy Cotton and Jenny Mason brave the rain

Dreams hit by lack of home space

HOMEOWNERS in the West Midlands do not feel their homes are fit for purpose, according to a study.

The survey, by roof window manufacturers VELUX, looked at how homeowners are increasingly looking to start their own businesses or pursue hobbies at home.

The survey found that a quarter of adults in the West Midlands believe that a lack of a suitable space or room is holding them back. More than half said they would pursue a hobby at home if they had more space or an appropriate room.

Grant Sneddon, product manager from VELUX, said: "Our homes are increasingly regarded as an intrinsic part of our lives, a place where we can unwind and relax, but also where we can realise those dreams of starting our own business, or doing more of the things we love, such as baking, reading or fitness."

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Museum wins battle to save town's former gas showroom

THE BATTLE to save a former historic gas showroom in West Bromwich has been won by the Black Country Living Museum – despite council chiefs dismissing plans as 'pie in the sky' earlier this year.

The building in West Bromwich High Street will now be relocated to the museum base as part of its £21 million expansion project. It was given the go-ahead to be demolished in May.

But bosses at the Tipton Road site – who have campaigned to save the building since last year – say that they will now pay additional costs to make sure that it is taken down brick-by-brick. It contradicts claims made by council members in recent months that the museum did not have a 'credible proposal' for the 'pie in the sky' relocation of the 1940s building, as no offer was ever presented to them by the museum.

Councillor Paul Moore, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "I am very pleased to get confirmation from the museum that they are prepared to pay the additional costs of demolishing the building in order to relocate the sections they want to save.

The current site of the showroom

Costs

"The extra costs come from the need to remove the parts of the building the museum require brick-by-brick rather than just the usual demolition process.

"It is important that we remove the building as soon as possible and I was always anxious that the removal of the building by the museum would not bring additional costs for the local council taxpayers. The council looks forward to continuing to work with the museum on this project and their future plans."

The relocation of the building will form part of the museum's ambitious plans to bring buildings back to life as part of a major restoration project. It will see the attraction expanded by a third as a new 1940-60s town is built.

Jonathan Wilson, deputy chief executive of collections, learning and research, said: "The Gas Showroom is one of the key buildings we have identified to create at the Museum as part of BCLM: Forging Ahead since it gives us the opportunity to tell a range of real Black Country lives and stories of social and domestic life from the 1940s-1960s.

"The unsafe condition of the building in its current location means that its heritage cannot be saved in situ but we are delighted to be able to extend its legacy at the Museum for many years to come."

Tributes to Baggies super fan Les, 91

THE famous FA Cup win, heartbreaking near-misses and relegations and promotions to the Premier League – Les James witnessed it all.

The Albion fanatic devoted his life to the Baggies, following the team through thick and thin from the 1940s.

The club has paid tribute to Les who died aged 91, following a short illness.

It was a few years after the Second World War, in 1948, that Les went to his first Albion game and from then on he was hooked.

He was believed to have been the oldest supporter still regularly following the club home and away.

It will be with a tinge of sadness that the new season kicks off in under two weeks' time, with the familiar, friendly face of Les missing from The Hawthorns.

He once told how he was taken ill but signed himself out of hospital so he could watch Albion play Liverpool.

John Homer, from the official supporters club, said: "He was a lovely, lovely man and had lots of friends at the Albion, both fans and the football club.

"He had a home season ticket and travelled away whenever he could. He very rarely grumbled about the team and the performance."

Les, who was from Smethwick, was honoured by the club in November 2015 to mark his 90th birthday, when he was invited as a special guest in the Regis Suite where he met some of his heroes from his years supporting Albion, including his all-time hero Tony 'Bomber' Brown.

Les James with Ben Foster and Adrian Chiles on his 90th birthday

Mattresses carpets and clothes left by roadside

MATTRESSES, carpets, wallpaper and clothing were among rubbish dumped in a Black Country road. The items were left in Scafell Way, West Bromwich, around 2am last Friday.

Sandwell Council said that they would be tracing and fining those responsible. Following the incident the council tweeted pictures of the waste with a video camera still of a white van in the area at the time.

They said: "Disgusting. Dumped in Scafell Way West Bromwich at 2am this morning. We'll be tracing and fining those responsible." Councillor Elaine Costigan, cabinet member for public health and protection, said: "Yet again we've seen a huge amount of rubbish dumped, leaving the council to foot the bill for removing it.

"It's not just unsightly, it poses a public health risk and places an unnecessary burden on council budgets and our taxpayers. We're taking a tough line on fly-tipping and those responsible will not get away with it.

"I'd ask anyone with any information about who dumped this rubbish to call 0121 368 1177. You can also report fly-tipping at sandwell.gov.uk/flytipping."

Donation made by firm to hospice

AN accountancy firm has donated £3,500 to a hospice following a year of fundraising. JW Hinks chose St Mary's Hospice in Birmingham as its charity for the year.

Neal Aston, managing partner at JW Hinks, said: "The team have done an excellent job raising money for such a brilliant charity.

Legion of interest in map of Roman roads

THEY built 2,000 miles of famously straight roads across the UK – including highways through Staffordshire and the West Midlands that are still used today.

Now a London Underground-style map of Roman roads has been drawn up by a student studying statistics at the University of Chicago.

The colourful network simplifies the road system of 43 – 410 AD Britain for modern history fans.

The map looks very different to a 21st century A-Z or road atlas, with no sign of how important Birmingham or the Black Country conurbation of Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell, and Walsall would become – and no trace of an M6, M54, A449, A454 or an A41.

The only local towns shown on student Sasha Trubetskoy's subway map are Penkridge, given its Latin name of Pennocrucium, and Wall, then called Letocetum, both important stopping-off places on the Romans' long journeys around the country.

Important

Pennocrucium was around three miles south-west of the modern town of Penkridge. Wall was near the junction of Watling Street and Icknield Street, also shown on the map, now known as the A38. Both were important military staging posts for the Romans, providing accommodation, baths and a change of horses.

One of their most important routes was Watling Street, the Roman military road to North Wales, which ran from east to west, beneath the modern A5 trunk road, running through Brownhills and Cannock. The Via Devana was another road built for military use rather than to serve the local population, which was very sparse in these parts during Roman times.

It ran from Colchester in the south-east through Wall and Penkridge to Chester, which lays claim to being the oldest Roman city in Britain. The road later fell into disuse.

All the roads were designed to allow troops to move quickly, and also provided vital routes for business, trade and the transportation of goods.

While the roads were very advanced for their time, transport itself was not so sophisticated, and a journey from London to York, which today would take four hours by car, would have taken five days to complete in a carriage. Roman roads were typically 16 to 23ft – f ive to seven metres – wide.

Their preservation in the UK varies, with some still protruding from the land and easily visible while others are hidden under earth and have only been found thanks to light detection scanning.

Within the map, the dots and circles show the cities, towns and settlements, while the different coloured lines denote the roads, with a key explaining these on the right.

It includes the Latin names for towns and cities across the UK, such as Londinium, London, Mamucium. Manchester, and Pons Aelius, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

Mr Trubetosky, who spent days making the map, said: "I pretty much included every known Roman settlement in Britain, as well as some locations that were only a fort/camp, or tribal settlement under Roman control.

The Roman site at Wall, near Letocetum

Watling Street runs through Brownhills

Sasha Trubetskoy's underground-style map of the country's Roman roads

The Ticket

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Hallelujah! Scott's on a music mission

The churches of Wolverhampton, Staffordshire and Shropshire may be put to an unusual use in coming months as the region's Ivor Novello Award-winning Scott Matthews embarks on a remarkable journey.

The Wolverhampton-based singer/songwriter is presently recording his sixth album, which is due for release in April, and hopes to record in a venue with stunning acoustics.

And rather than head to studios in London, Bath, Wales or Scotland – he wants to stay close to home and find a unique and bespoke environment in which to record. The idea is to capture the magic that Scott's concerts create, where fans from around the UK find themselves spellbound by the mystery of his evocative, spine-tingling songs.

Scott became a huge success when he released the hit single Elusive, which was a BBC Radio favourite and earned him a tour with the Foo Fighters, a major recording deal with Island – home to U2, Bob Marley, Nick Drake and others – and won an Ivor Novello Award.

He has since released five albums – including his two most recent, Home Pt I and Home Pt II – and is embarking on a new record, which has a working title of Chapters.

Scott says: "I'm writing at home and have a number of songs. I want to get to 15 or so, and whittle that down to 10. The idea for recording in a church came about because they have such brilliant acoustics. Recording in a unique environment, rather than a traditional studio, also adds a little magic to the performance. There's something that happens when I play a concert, a feeling, or an energy, that the audience and I both feel. The idea is that by recording in a church with sensational acoustics, I can recreate that feeling and commit it to the record."

The record will be released in spring 2018, with an accompanying tour. And Scott, one of the UK's most revered and respected singer/songwriters, is finally recording a stripped-down album featuring only him and a guitar.

SHED

Fans are being given the chance to engage with the recording process by getting regular updates from the artist, through an organisation called Pledge Music.

Pledge Music gives performers who choose not to have a record deal the opportunity to work directly with fans – where they pre-order signed copies of the work, which helps to pay the upfront costs of recording.

Scott adds: "I founded my own record label – Shedio – which is based around the converted garden shed at the bottom of my garden. That's the space where I usually record. The fan-funded model works really well because fans then get the chance to find out about the process while it is still on-going.

On a song – Scott won an Ivor Novello in 2007

They get regular updates, which might include messages from me, video updates – all sorts of things.

"Then, when the record is complete, they are the first to receive a signed copy of the new album, which is delivered to their door. It's pretty simple for people to get involved. They just need to go online and search for Pledge Music, then search for Scott Matthews and all of the details appear."

Scott says financing the project is not the most important part of Pledge. The thing that he enjoys best is having direct access to his fans.

"You might wake up one morning and there'll be a message from someone in Paraguay who has just discovered the back catalogue, which is great. Or, alternatively, you might get a fan from somewhere in the UK who is really passionate about the music and can speak articulately about particular songs.

"That really fuels my fire. Having that direct link with the fans, where they can tell me what they think, is a massive boost. And that's one of the things I'm looking forward to as I record my sixth album."

Scott remains in the spotlight and was recently asked by the BBC to unveil a commemorative Blue Plaque at the former home of iconic British folk singer Nick Drake, who lived at Tanworth-In-Arden.

Scott was happy to oblige and performed the ceremony alongside fellow singer/songwriter Simon Fowler, best known as frontman with Ocean Colour Scene.

"It was an enormous honour," he says. "There have been a few highlights in my career: winning an Ivor Novello, presenting John Martyn with a Lifetime Achievement Award in a room full of people like John Martyn and so on. But being asked to unveil the plaque at Nick Drake's home was remarkable. There were little rural paths that he would have walked along. It was easy to marvel at the things that would have gone on in his room, at the records that would have been delivered to his door and so on. It was a real privileged, a very special moment." Scott, an avid Wolverhampton Wanderers fans, is looking forward to being back on the road in spring – though eagle-eyed fans might get the chance to see him play a few unannounced shows before then, when he trials new songs.

> *I'm very excited to be finally recording a record that's just me and a guitar*

"You can learn more from a three-minute soundcheck, or by playing a song at a gig, than you can by spending a year writing and refining a song. So I plan to road-test a few of the songs with a small number of gigs this autumn. The record will be finished by December, I'll reflect for a little while and then it will be out in spring. I'm very excited to be finally recording a record that's just me and a guitar. And, having released five albums already, I'm just thrilled to have the opportunity to record and release a sixth."

● Fans who want to pre-order signed copies of Scott Scott' new album can log onto Pledge Music to receive regular updates at: www.pledgemusic.com/projects/scott-Scott-studio-album-six

Andy Richardson

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

Blondie in 2017

One way or another, Blondie are heart of class

Blondie are back with a new album, Pollinator, and a tour that calls in at Birmingham city centre's Barclaycard Arena on November 13.

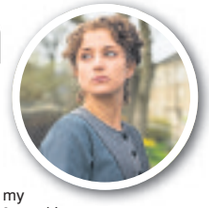
The New York band was formed more than 40 years ago and still features original members, iconic frontwoman Debbie Harry, guitarist Chris Stein and drummer Clem Burke, alongside long standing band mates Leigh Foxx (bass), Tommy Kessler (guitar) and Matt Katz-Bohen (keyboard).

Emerging from the stateside punk scene, they became one of the greatest pop bands of the 1970s and 80s. They still create new music to go alongside such classics as Heart of Glass, Hanging On The Telephone, Sunday Girl, Dreaming, Call Me, Atomic, The Tide Is High, Rapture and Maria.

Eleventh studio album Pollinator, which came out in May, features songs written by Stein and Harry alongside songwriting or studio contributions from former Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr, Sia, Charli XCX, Nick Valensi from The Strokes, Joan Jett, Laurie Anderson, and Dave Sitek from TV On The Radio.

Blondie are also involved in the BEE Connected campaign to raise awareness of the decline in the bee population.

Brontë classic given Eyre time at Rep



THIS year marks the 170th anniversary of the first publication of Charlotte Brontë's classic novel of gothic romance Jane Eyre.

As part of the celebrations, the National Theatre with Bristol Old Vic are bringing an imaginative new stage adaptation to Birmingham Rep, from September 4 to 16, as part of a nationwide tour.

Brontë's much-loved story is still an inspiration. This dynamic production tells the story of one woman's fight for freedom. From her beginnings as a destitute orphan, the spirited heroine faces life's obstacles head-on, surviving poverty, injustice and betrayal before taking the ultimate decision to follow her heart.

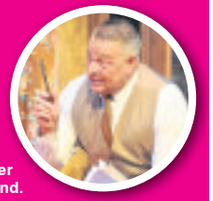
Director Sally Cookson said "Adapting a novel for the stage is a challenging prospect, especially when that novel is cited as many people's favourite of all time. It is always daunting when you're working on a story which everyone knows so well. It's a story that I love and have enjoyed a close relationship with ever since I was intrigued, as a child, by Orson Welles' black and white melodrama.

"I didn't actually read the novel until I was in my early 20s and I remember thinking while I read it: 'This is a clarion cry for equal opportunities for women, not a story about a passive female'. I was struck by how modern Jane seemed – her spirit and strong will, her peculiar and brilliant mind striving for personal freedom. She was exactly the sort of person I wanted to be."

In this three hour staging Nadia Clifford, pictured, plays Jane Eyre with Tim Delap as Rochester.

See birmingham-rep.co.uk or call the box office on 0121 236 4455.

Trespass at the Grand for chills



Following the success of The Woman in Black, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre hosts another ghost story when Trespass is staged from August 15 to 21. In Emlyn Williams' play a widow asks a medium to help make contact with her recently deceased husband. The cast includes Rebecca Wheatley from Casualty, David Callister, pictured, from The Bill, Michelle Morris (The Knock) and Judy Buxton (On The Up). See grandtheatre.co.uk or call 01902 429212.

Rocking all over the Robin with Quo hits

A night of vintage Quo boogie will be heard at Bilston's Robin 2 when the original Status Quo drummer brings John Coghlan's Quo to the Black Country venue.

Drawing on the era From Pictures Of Matchstick Men to Rocking All Over The World, this big night out for the demin-clad head nodders will be held next Thursday, August 10.

Other highlights at the Robin include The Naked Beatles with Lusty Springfield tomorrow (Friday) which may sound like a dodgy movie but is actually a 60s tribute night. Then it's the MaetLoaf tribute 'Bat Out Of Hell' special on Saturday and Flash, Tribute to Queen, is on August 11. It's the Bilston reggae sunsplash with tributes to Bob Marley and UB40 on August 12. See therobin.co.uk or call 01902 401211.

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SATURDAY'S TV AUGUST 5

CHOICE

Billy Connolly

Billy Connolly: Portrait of a Lifetime (BBC2, 9pm)

A programme celebrating Billy Connolly's 75th birthday and 50 years in the business, as three Scottish artists, John Byrne, Jack Vettriano and Rachel MacLean, each create a new portrait of the comedian and actor. As he sits with each artist, Billy talks about his remarkable career which has taken him from musician and stand up to Hollywood star and national treasure.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nadiya's British Food Adventure. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.00 Film:** I Am Bolt. (2016) Documentary about the life and career of world-record breaking Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt, who has won the 100m and 200m gold medals at the last three Olympics. **3.30** The Heroes of Super Saturday: Jess, Mo & Greg. (R) **4.25** Escape to the Continent. (R) **5.25** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.10 BBC News.

6.20 Regional Programme.

6.30 World Athletics Championships 2017. Gabby Logan presents coverage of the second night of events at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, which will include the men's 100m final. Should he have made it through to the final as expected, Usain Bolt will be making his final individual appearance at a major championships and will be looking to bow out while still the fastest man in the world. Plus, medals are decided in the men's discus and long jump, and women's 10,000m, the heptathlon continues with the shot put and 200m, and the women's 1500m semi-finals take place. With analysis from Michael Johnson, Colin Jackson and Denise Lewis.

10.00 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.20 Film: Mrs Brown's Boys D'Movie. (2014) The indomitable Irish matriarch discovers that a plan is afoot by developers to buy the famous Dublin street market where her family has run a fruit and veg stall for generations. Assembling a band of eccentric allies, she plans to fight back, only to realise her daughter is not interested in taking over the family business. Comedy, starring Brendan O'Carroll.

11.55 Film: I Know What You Did Last Summer. (1997) Four teenagers accidentally run over a stranger and hide the body rather than inform the authorities, only to find themselves stalked the following year by a shadowy figure who takes great delight in disposing of them in a variety of gruesome ways. Horror, starring Jennifer Love Hewitt.

1.30 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.35** BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 Film: The Spanish Main. (1945) **7.45 Film:** The Magic Box. (1951) **9.30** World Athletics Championships 2017. **2.00** Food & Drink. (R) **2.30** Flog It! (R) **3.20** Mastermind. (R) **3.50** University Challenge. (R) **4.20** Only Connect. (R) **4.50** Gardeners' World. (R) **5.50** The Sweet Makers: A Victorian Treat. (R)

6.50 Proms Extra. Katie Derham, Stuart Skelton, Ailish Tynan and Ken Burton discuss Beethoven's Symphony No 9. Plus, a Proms centenary tribute to Ella Fitzgerald and Dizzy Gillespie.

7.30 Royal Cousins at War. Part one of two. Documentary examining what impact the relationships between cousins Nicholas II of Russia, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and George V of the United Kingdom had on the outbreak of the First World War. This episode focuses on the story of the emerging divisions and rivalries between the inter-related royal houses of Europe during the 19th century. Featuring contributions by historians Karina Urbach, Miranda Carter and Piers Brendon. Tamsin Greig narrates. (R)

8.30 Dad's Army. Corporal Jones finds himself cast adrift during an exercise pitting Mainwaring and his home-front heroes against their arch-rival Captain Square. (R)

9.00 Billy Connolly: Portrait of a Lifetime. A programme celebrating the life and career of Billy Connolly, as three Scottish artists each create a new portrait of the comedian and actor.

10.00 World Athletics Championships 2017. Gabby Logan presents reaction to and analysis of the second night of events at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

10.30 Film: What We Did on Our Holiday. (2014) Three children give away all the secrets of their parents' troubled marriage while visiting their grandfather. Comedy drama, starring Rosamund Pike.

11.55 Golf: Women's Open Highlights. Eilidh Barbour presents action from the third day of the event, which this year is staged at Kingsbarns Golf Links in Fife.

1.00 Film: In the House. (2012) A teacher encourages a pupil to write about his relationship with a wealthy family, which feeds unhealthy obsessions. Drama, with Fabrice Luchini and Kristin Scott Thomas. **2.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.25** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.40** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** ITV Racing: The Opening Show. **10.20** Gok's Lunchbox. (R) **11.15** 1000 Heartbeats. (R) **12.15** ITV News; Weather. **12.25** Tipping Point. (R) **1.30** ITV Racing Live: Goodwood Festival. Coverage of the fifth and final day of the event. **4.00** The Chase. (R) **5.00** Little Big Shots USA.

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.05 ITV News; Weather.

6.15 You've Been Framed! Bites Back! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, including an angry woman who throws a dart into her husband's leg, an electrolysis accident that delivers a powerful electric shock to an unlucky man's nipple and why teaching a toddler to operate a full-size tractor is a bad idea. (R)

7.15 Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show, asking three contestants to "see it and say it" as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000.

8.00 Film: The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies. (2014) Premiere. Dwarf king Thorin reclaims control of his homeland, but his descent into madness places him on the brink of war with his human and elven allies. As Thorin's Hobbit friend Bilbo tries to save the tormented ruler from himself, a vast horde of orcs gathers to destroy them all. Conclusion of the fantasy adventure trilogy, starring Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage, Ian McKellen, Luke Evans and Orlando Bloom.

10.35 ITV News; Weather.

10.50 Film: GoldenEye. (1995) Spy adventure, with Pierce Brosnan, Sean Bean and Izabella Scorupco.

1.20 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 Tenerife Bluetrail. **6.40** Motor Sport: Chateau Impney Hill Climb. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Frasier. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **12.50** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.20** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.55** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.25** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.30** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** Big House, Little House. **5.35** Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Britain at Low Tide. Tori Herridge and Alex Langlands set out to document Britain's industrial and natural maritime history, using state-of-the-art technology to comb the nation's exposed coastlines during times of low tide. They first head out to the Northumbrian coastline, to investigate the tragic story of a French fishing trawler that was wrecked off shore in 1913. (R)

8.00 Paul O'Grady's Hollywood. New series. The first of three programmes in which the veteran TV presenter delves into the rich vein of cinematic history to find out what it takes to transform a film into a silver-screen masterpiece capable to standing the test of time. Taking in everything from big production musicals to vehicles for enduring screen heroines, Paul reveals what makes celebrated movies so memorable. He begins with classic "weepies", from the early silent melodramas through to James Cameron's Titanic, and hears from Jon Voight, Bernard Cribbins, Celine Dion and the casts of E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial and Beaches.

9.00 Film: Red. (2010) A retired CIA agent survives an assassination attempt and realises something in his past has made him a target. He sets out to reunite the members of his old hit squad to find out who is trying to kill them and why, but in the process, uncovers dangerous secrets. Action thriller, with Bruce Willis and Morgan Freeman.

11.10 Film: American Reunion. (2012)

1.15 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **2.05** The Last Leg. (R) **3.00** Hollyoaks. **5.05** Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.40** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **10.55** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. **11.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.15** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.15** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **2.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **3.10** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **4.05** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **5.00** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R)

6.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Agents Paul Bohill and Steve Pinner get caught up in a dispute between a landlord and a tenant who refuses to move out, and Brian O'Shaughnessy and Delroy Anglin chase a £17,000 debt. Meanwhile, in Essex, a couple owe their neighbour £11,000, and on the south coast, debt collection from a Turkish restaurant gets complicated when there is confusion about ownership. (R)

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v South Africa. Highlights of the second day's play in the final Test of the four-match series, which took place at Old Trafford in Manchester.

8.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away: Violent Encounters. Two enforcement agents make a shocking discovery in a child's bedroom during an eviction, and a debtor gets physical when he is visited over wages owed to a freelancer. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. Highlights from the latest games in the Championship, which included Sunderland v Derby County and Wolverhampton Wanderers v Middlesbrough.

9.50 Football on 5: Goal Rush. Goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, which included Southend United v Blackburn Rovers, and Forest Green Rovers v Barnet.

10.20 Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of the housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.

11.20 Queens of Pop. A compilation of hit music videos by chart-topping female soloists, highlighting how women have dominated the music industry like never before during the past 10 years.

12.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Royal Funerals: The Inside Story. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Capability Brown's Unfinished Garden **8.00** Britain's Treasure Islands **9.00** I Know Who You Are **11.15** Top of the Pops: 1984 **12.30** From Andy Pandy to Zebedee: The Golden Age of Children's TV **1.30** Slade at the BBC **2.30** Nina Simone & Me with Laura Mvula **3.00** Britain's Treasure Islands **4.00** Close

ITV2

11.30 Take Me Out **12.40** Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule **1.10** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.40 Film:** The Waterboy (1998) **2.40** FYI Daily **2.45 Film:** The Waterboy (1998) **3.30 Film:** Yogi Bear (2010) **4.30** FYI Daily **4.35 Film:** Yogi Bear (2010) **5.10 Film:** Nanny McPhee (2005) **6.10** FYI Daily **6.15 Film:** Nanny McPhee (2005) **7.15 Film:** Liar Liar (1997) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20 Film:** Liar Liar (1997) **9.00 Film:** Fast & Furious 5 (2011) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** Fast & Furious 5 (2011) **11.35** Family Guy **1.05 Film:** This Is the End (2013) **2.05** FYI Daily **2.10 Film:** This Is the End (2013) **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

12.55 Film: Rest in Peace, Mrs Columbo (1990) **2.55** Lewis **7.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** Law & Order: UK **1.55** On the Buses **2.20** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

12.15 Film: Dunkirk (1958) **1.25** FYI Daily **1.30 Film:** Dunkirk (1958) **3.00 Film:** The Alamo (1960) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05 Film:** The Alamo (1960) **6.15** Storage Wars **7.15 Film:** Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25 Film:** Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **9.00 Film:** Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991) **11.45 Film:** Harry Brown (2009) **12.45** FYI Daily **12.50 Film:** Harry Brown (2009) **1.50** Road Racing Series **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

1.05 The Goldbergs **3.35** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Don't Tell the Bride **9.00 Film:** Bridesmaids (2011) **11.30** Gogglebox **1.10** Rude Tube **2.15** Tattoo Fixers **3.10** Gogglebox **3.50** How I Met Your Mother **4.40** Rude(ish) Tube

Film4

11.00 ParaNorman (2012) **1.00** The Boxtrolls (2014) **2.50** The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) **5.05** Carry On Cleo (1964) **6.55** Ghostbusters II (1989) **9.00** Oblivion (2013) **11.25** The Pyramid (2014) **1.10** The Master (2012) **4.00** Close

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WOLVERHAMPTON MAGAZINE

SUNDAY'S TV AUGUST 6

CHOICE

Diana, Princess of Wales

Diana: In Her Own Words (Channel 4, 8pm)
Documentary featuring never-before-seen footage of Diana, Princess of Wales, recorded by her speech consultant between 1992 and 1993 as she sought to define her public persona and present her own version of events reported in the press, touching on her marriage and experience of public life. The programme also features in-depth interviews with people close to her.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** BBC News. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Wallace & Gromit: A Grand Day Out. (R) **1.40 Film:** Frozen. (2013) Disney animated fantasy adventure, with the voice of Kristen Bell. **3.10** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.40** Songs of Praise. **4.15** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **5.00** BBC News. **5.20** Regional Programme. **5.30** Countryfile.

6.30 World Athletics Championships 2017. Gabby Logan presents coverage of the third night of events at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Great Britain's Katarina Johnson-Thompson will conclude her bid for gold in the heptathlon when she competes in the 800m, but she was expected to face stiff competition throughout the seven disciplines from Belgium's Olympic champion Nafissatou Thiam. Plus, medals are decided in the women's pole vault, and semi-finals take place in the men's 400m and 110m hurdles. With analysis from Michael Johnson, Colin Jackson and Denise Lewis, and commentary by Steve Cram, Andrew Cotter, Brendan Foster and Steve Backley, and reports from Ore Oduba and Phil Jones. Coverage continues on BBC2.

9.00 Poldark. Sir Francis places Ross in charge of a group of volunteers to defend the Cornish coast after Prudie and Tholly catch sight of French ships on the horizon. George returns from parliament and is outraged to discover that Drake is living in the smithy on the edge of Trenwith land. However, Tom Harry is only too happy to take on the task of making sure he does not remain there for long. Emma struggles to reconcile her feelings for Sam with their religious differences, and Hugh continues to court Demelza in secret. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 MOTD: Community Shield Highlights. Chelsea v Arsenal. Action from the traditional curtain-raiser to the top-flight campaign.

11.15 Film: The Recruit. (2003) Thriller, starring Al Pacino and Colin Farrell.

1.05 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 The Instant Gardener. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.05** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** World Athletics Championships 2017. **5.00** Britain's Ancient Capital: Secrets of Orkney. (R)

6.00 Steve Backshall's Extreme Mountain Challenge. Part one of two. The naturalist leads a team of rock climbers across Venezuela's tepuis – sheer-sided mountains surrounded by jungle. In the first episode, he attempts an ascent of a rockface that has never been climbed previously to discover what kind of animals live at the summit. However, to get there he will have to brave wildlife, rapids and a run-in with a rickety biplane. (R)

7.00 Inside the Factory. Gregg Wallace and Cherry Healey visit factories to find out how household staples are made and Ruth Goodman examines their history. (R)

8.00 Secrets of Silicon Valley. Part one of two. Jamie Bartlett investigates how technology companies are shaping the future of the world, and the potential negative consequences of the drive towards progress.

9.00 World Athletics Championships 2017. Gabby Logan presents further coverage of the third night of events at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, including the women's 100m final, which was won by Jamaica's Olympic champion Elaine Thompson two years ago. Plus, the men's shot put final concludes, and double Olympic champion David Rudisha is expected to be involved in the men's 800m semi-finals. With analysis from Michael Johnson, Colin Jackson and Denise Lewis, commentary by Steve Cram, Andrew Cotter, Brendan Foster and Steve Backley, and reports from Ore Oduba.

10.30 Gareth Thomas: Hate in the Beautiful Game. Former Wales and Lions rugby union captain Gareth Thomas investigates what is preventing gay footballers from coming out, talking to players, fans and managers in a bid to find out.

11.30 Golf: Women's Open Highlights. Eilidh Barbour presents action from the fourth and final day.

12.30 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.25** Holby City. (R) **2.25** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Sooty. (R) **6.30** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Ninjago: Rebooted. (R) **8.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **10.20** Long Lost Family. (R) **11.20** Love Your Garden. (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.25** James Martin's French Adventure. (R) **12.55** Rebound. (R) **1.55** Tipping Point. (R) **2.55** Bear Grylls Survival School. (R) **3.25 Film:** The Living Daylights. (1987) James Bond adventure, starring Timothy Dalton.

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 The Chase Celebrity Special. Phil Daniels, Janette Manrara, Isabel Hodgins and Roy Hudd answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh.

7.30 Film: Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. (2009) The young wizard is given the task of uncovering the secrets of Lord Voldemort's past as the evil sorcerer's henchmen cause havoc in both the magical and Muggle worlds. With the help of headmaster Dumbledore, Harry ventures into the memories of those who knew the Dark Lord during his early years, hoping to gain an insight into the secret behind his apparent immortality. However, Voldemort's influence extends much closer to home than expected, as Harry's rival Malfoy is chosen to carry out a sinister mission. Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Daniel Radcliffe.

10.25 ITV News; Weather.

10.40 Judge Rinder's Crime Stories. Barrister Robert Rinder reveals the story of a gang of criminals who attempted to steal the world's most perfectly formed diamond from the Millennium Dome in November 2000. (R)

11.40 Take Me Out. A fitness instructor, a pianist, a research executive and a construction worker submit themselves for approval in front of Paddy McGuinness's panel of 30 single ladies. (R)

12.40 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R) **6.10** Last Man Standing. **6.35** Cycling: Gigante De Piedra. **7.00** Motor Sport: Armoy Road Race Build-Up. **7.30** Motor Sport: Armoy Road Race 2017. **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **3.00** UEFA Women's Euro 2017: The Final Live. Coverage of the showpiece match (Kick-off 4.00pm).

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 The Mystery of the Crossrail Skulls. Documentary examining the discovery of dozens of Romanera skulls by engineers working beneath London's Liverpool Street station. The remains have been identified as dating back to Roman times, but it has yet to be determined who these people were and how their heads ended up buried on the site. Archaeologists examine the bones for evidence of the various theories that have been suggested, questioning whether the skulls belonged to gladiators, executed rebels or the victims of a massacre, or formed part of a grisly ritual. (R)

8.00 Diana: In Her Own Words. Documentary featuring never-before-seen footage of Diana, Princess of Wales, recorded by her speech consultant between 1992 and 1993 as she sought to define her public persona and present her own version of events reported in the press, touching on her marriage and experience of public life. The programme also features in-depth interviews with people close to her.

9.50 Film: The King's Speech. (2010) The younger son of George V struggles to cope with an uncontrollable stammer, prompting his wife to enlist the aid of an eccentric Australian speech therapist. The support and friendship of the doctor prove invaluable when a crisis places the repressed prince on the throne, just as the outbreak of the Second World War leaves the country in need of a strong king. Oscar-winning fact-based drama, starring Colin Firth.

12.00 Film: The Anomaly. (2014) **1.40** 60 Days in Jail. (R) **2.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **3.25** Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Poppy Cat. **6.10** Little Princess. (R) **6.25** Mr Men. (R) **6.35** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.45** Simon. (R) **6.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.55** Wissper. (R) **7.05** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.15** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.25** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.30** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.55** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.20** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.40** Floogals. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.05** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.15** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **10.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **10.20** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.05** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **11.30 Film:** Cheaper By the Dozen 2. (2005) **1.20** The Royals: Young, Rich & Famous. (R) **2.15** Inside Buckingham Palace: The Queen's Worst Year. (R) **3.15** Inside Buckingham Palace. (R) **4.15** Inside Buckingham Palace. (R) **5.10 Film:** Dirty Dancing. (1987) Romantic drama, with Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v South Africa. Highlights of the third day's play in the final Test of the four-match series, which took place at Old Trafford in Manchester.

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 Dads Make You Laugh Out Loud. Compilation of internet videos featuring fathers doing bizarre things, including a showcase of the world's most ridiculous dad dancing and some DIY dentistry using a helicopter to remove a loose tooth. With contributions from comedians Ellie Taylor, Angela Barnes and Dave Spikey. (R)

9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.

10.00 The Last Days of Patrick Swayze. Forensic pathologist Dr Jason Payne-James examines the death of the movie star in 2009 from pancreatic cancer, a condition that had left him all but unrecognisable.

11.05 Film: Point Break. (1991) An undercover FBI agent infiltrates a Californian surfing gang to investigate a spate of armed robberies. Kathryn Bigelow's thriller, starring Keanu Reeves.

1.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **4.00** The Railways That Built Britain with Chris Tarrant. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 BBC Proms 2017 **8.30** The Richard Burton Diaries **9.00** Frank Skinner on George Formby **10.00** Babs **11.30** Timeshift: Bouffants, Beehives and Bobs – The Hairstyles That Shaped Britain **12.30** Capability Brown's Unfinished Garden **1.30** Timeshift: How to Be a Lady – An Elegant History **2.30** Frank Skinner on George Formby **3.30** Close

ITV2
1.05 Mr Bean **2.15** You've Been Framed! Gold A to Z of Animals **3.20 Film:** Planet 51 (2009) **4.20** FYI Daily **4.25 Film:** Planet 51 (2009) **5.10 Film:** A Bug's Life (1998) **6.10** FYI Daily **6.15 Film:** A Bug's Life (1998) **7.15 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **10.00** Family Guy **11.55** American Dad! **12.50** The Cleveland Show **1.50** Viral Tap **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV3
11.45 The Darling Buds of May **12.55 Film:** Columbo: Butterfly in Shades of Grey (1993) **2.50** Wycliffe **3.55** Foyle's War **6.00** Lewis **8.00** Midsomer Murders **10.00** Law & Order: UK **12.00** Wire in the Blood **2.00** The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes **3.45** May the Best House Win **5.25** On the Buses **5.50** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
2.10 Film: The Alamo (1960) **4.20 Film:** The Man from the Alamo (1953) **5.20** FYI Daily **5.25 Film:** The Man from the Alamo (1953) **6.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **7.05 Film:** Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach (1988) **8.10** FYI Daily **8.15 Film:** Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach (1988) **9.00 Film:** Cliffhanger (1993) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** Cliffhanger (1993) **11.10 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **1.20** Car Crash Global **2.15** Hogan's Heroes **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen

E4
12.05 Born in Chelsea: Baby Steps **1.05** Kevin Can Wait **1.35** New Girl **2.35** The Goldbergs **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00 Film:** Night at the Museum (2006) **10.10** Don't Tell the Bride **11.15** Tattoo Fixers on Holiday **12.20** Gogglebox **1.10** Rude Tube **2.15** First Dates **3.10** How I Met Your Mother **3.35** Hollyoaks

Film4
11.00 Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer (2011) **1.00** Short Circuit (1986) **3.00** The Borrowers (1997) **4.40** Small Soldiers (1998) **6.50** GI Joe: Retaliation (2013) **9.00** Child 44 (2015) **11.40** The A-Team (2010) **2.00** Wild Bill (2011) **4.00** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
A Healthy Place to Die: The Gourmet Detective, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Charming culinary expert Henry Ross is invited to give a speech at a food conference at a luxury resort, but when a journalist guest goes missing, and later turns up dead, Henry once again finds himself joining forces with no-nonsense police detective Maggie Price to solve the crime. Crime comedy sequel, starring Dylan Neal and Brooke Burns. (2015)

TUESDAY
Spirit Riders, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A rebellious teenager is arrested and for her punishment is sent to an equine therapy camp, where she forms a connection with a spirited thoroughbred horse that she helps to train with the help of the ranch's no-nonsense owner. Family drama, starring Alexandria DeBerry, C Thomas Howell, Lance Henriksen and Olivia Osteen. (2015)

Strictly Ballroom, Friday, BBC1, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY
Broken Trust, Channel 5, 3.15pm
An attorney prepares to take on the biggest case of her career against a major pharmaceutical company, only for the lawyer who taught her everything she knows to be kidnapped. She enlists the aid of her police officer ex-husband in rescuing her mentor, while still ensuring a just outcome to the trial. Thriller, starring Laura Vandervoort. (2012)

THURSDAY
Viva Las Vegas, BBC2, 2.55pm
A charismatic racing driver arrives in the city to prepare for its first grand prix. Unfortunately, his car has no engine, so to make the money to buy one he takes a job as a casino waiter. However, he loses focus when he falls in love, leaving a rival with the means to steal the race and his girl. Musical, starring Elvis Presley. (1964)

FRIDAY
Strictly Ballroom, BBC1, 11.05pm
A ballroom dancer, shunned for his unconventional style, tries to win a championship title with the aid of an awkward novice. Australian comedy, with Paul Mercurio and Tara Morice. (1992)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Robin's theory takes the inquiry in a new direction

Thanks to her roles in Mad Men, the original series of Top of the Lake and The Handmaid's Tale, Elisabeth Moss can claim to have starred in some of the most acclaimed TV shows of the past decade. But looking at her impressive CV, some viewers may wonder if after all that weighty drama, she ever fancies doing something a little bit lighter, like a wacky sitcom.

It seems not – she apparently only signed up for Top of the Lake: China Girl on the understanding that it would be even darker than the first series.

She explains that when writer and director Jane Campion asked her if she would be interested in reprising the role of detective Robin Griffin: "I said I would love to, but it would need to be more challenging than season one, otherwise there would be no point. I remember saying, 'I just want her to be challenged,' and thinking… how Robin could be challenged, what she might be going through."

And it seems Campion did not disappoint her. Moss says: "Without spoiling anything, the thing that we reveal in the flashback and some things that have happened over the last four years to Robin have put her in this really, really dark place. She's not had an easy life, this girl. So she starts out in Season 2 in this much darker place, and really messed up, so when I was reading it for the first time I was like, yes, yes, yes, yes!"

But it wasn't just the prospect of playing someone deeply troubled and miserable that attracted Moss to the part – there was also the chance to work with Campion again.

The actress says: "There's nobody like Jane. I've had the privilege of working with some very talented and amazing people, both well known and not well known, and there's something about the way that she speaks to you and the way that she guides you on set that isn't like anyone else.

"She has this very in-tune way of guiding you through a scene. She'll say something that makes you go, 'Oh, I didn't think about it that way," or she'll say 'this is your playground sweetie. Just have fun.'"

However, the characters don't appear to be having much fun in this week's episode as Robin's investigation into the murder of 'China Girl' takes a revealing new turn.

Meanwhile, Julia and Pyke launch an investigation of their own into Puss, the man who plans to marry their teenage daughter. When their findings lead to a public confrontation, Puss storms out – and Mary follows him.

Pyke and Julia are forced to turn to Robin, who begins to discover just how complex motherhood can be. Moss says: "This season is about being a mother and a parent, and it's interesting, going from that very strong theme of season one to an even stronger theme in season two, with all of these plot lines being connected around this central idea. But done in a brilliantly subtle way, which is believable."

Top of the Lake: China Girl, Thursday, BBC2, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Eden: Paradise Lost
Channel 4, 10pm
It sounds like the premise of a satirical comedy – 23 people sign up for a reality series about creating a new society and spend a year in isolation in a remote part of Britain, unaware that the channel only showed four episodes and then stopped airing the footage. However, it seems the reports from earlier this year claiming that this was the fate of Channel 4's Eden project were very wide of the mark, as Channel 4 is now showing us what really happened. Stripped across the week, the footage shows how the dream turned into a nightmare for the residents of Eden – two people had already left three months into the project, and by the summer of 2016, hunger and divisions had firmly set in, as boatman Anton and carpenter Raph built a winter camp in the woods.

TUESDAY
Trust Me
BBC1, 9pm
Some TV addicts may wonder how long Jodie Whittaker's new series sat on the shelf before that big announcement was made the other week. Yes, the one about her becoming the first official female Doctor Who. While the internet went into meltdown, canny BBC bosses scheduled this new drama, and Ms Whittaker, as usual, is on top form, here playing nurse Cath Hardacre. Driven to desperate measures, she steals the identity of her best friend, an A&E doctor and begins a new life in Edinburgh as Dr Ally Sutton. Blake Harrison from The Inbetweeners also stars.

WEDNESDAY
My Family, Partition and Me: India 1947
BBC1, 9pm
Anita Rani tells the emotional stories of four different families - Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and British colonial - caught up in the violence during the Partition of India, as they travel for the first time to the homes in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh that their families fled in terror. Binita Kane arrives in Bangladesh to investigate what happened when her Hindu father Bim had to flee his ancestral village as a boy. Meanwhile, Mandy Duke heads to Calcutta, scene of some of the worst Partition violence, to uncover the amazing story of her grandfather Arthur Wise. Plus, we also follow Asad Ali Syed and his grandson Sameer, two British Muslims with Pakistani heritage, as they journey to the Indian town of Ambala, to search for the house where Asad was born. Finally, Anita investigates the events that led to her own grandfather's first wife, children and her great grandfather losing their lives.

Teach My Pet To Do That, Friday, ITV, 8pm

THURSDAY
10 Puppies and Us
BBC2, 8pm
Emma Lowe goes in search of a special puppy, wanting one that will act as a therapy dog for her four-year-old son, who has Down's syndrome, and soothe him when he is distressed. Meanwhile, newlyweds Leigh and Bella are forced to call in behaviourist Louise Glazebrook when their new pug Butch Cassidy has trouble sleeping on a night. There are also catch-ups with salon owner Hannah, who is taking on her third Chihuahua, and psychic Delia as she welcomes the big-breed Leonberger she fell in love with. But as the small puppy grows, she finds herself completely out of her depth.

FRIDAY
Teach My Pet To Do That
ITV, 8pm
New series. Animal lover and comedian Alexander Armstrong is joined by a team of specialist pet trainers as they teach a range of animals and pets to pull off incredible tricks. In the first episode, the host welcomes a daschund labrador cross called Eric and a miniature horse call Aslan, as trainers Jo-Rosie Haffenden and Nando Brown attempt to teach them how to answer a door to the cue of a doorbell. Elsewhere in the programme, the trainers hit the road and attempt to train River the cat to ride on the back of Moss the dog.

World Athletics Championships 2017
BBC1, 8.30pm
Gabby Logan presents further coverage of the eighth night at The London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Defending champions are expected to go head-to-head with Olympic gold medallists in both the women's 200m and 3,000m steeplechase.

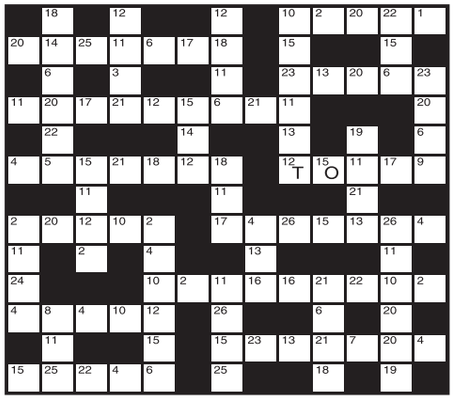
*All prices are subject to VAT

BRAIN GYM

No.441

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



1	14
2	15 O
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12 T	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
X	Q	T	G	K	Y	R	V	M	N	O	E	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
A	H	I	F	L	J	P	U	Z	B	C	W	D

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

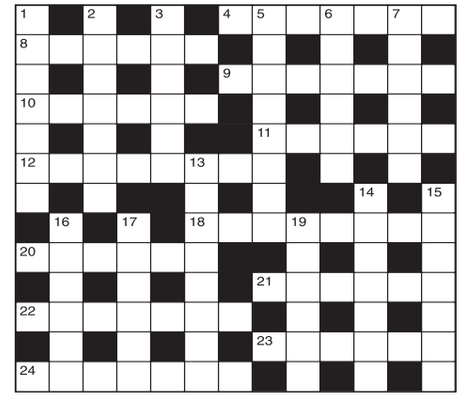
Cryptic Clues:

Across

4. They accompany wild Cortes to the south (7)
8. Charged for being drunk (6)
9. A politician after alternative rhetorical expression (7)
10. What the watch did is marked as correct (6)
11. The top of a sugar-coated cake? (3-3)
12. Not in favour of a little work modelling (8)
18. Fixed a fight and attacked (3,5)
20. Isn't able to keep a girl in bed (6)
21. Top grade fish in poor condition (6)
22. About to do some arithmetic and tell a story (7)
23. Onslaught to put new life into the battery (6)
24. Put one's foot down and made an impression (7)

Down

1. One tail wagging in high spirits! (7)
2. Crazy internationals are tearaways (7)
3. Removes any inclination (6)
5. Seeing about painting being put up in a right line (8)
6. Not in the clique for a start (6)
7. Sailor Brown checked material (6)
13. The cane isn't used for example (8)
14. Artistic work by the shearer? (7)
15. Cause amazement when rags get out of order (7)
16. Half last camping gear in lying out of sight (6)
17. Where the schoolboy may be found to be a tell-tale (6)
19. What attracts the moth to settle (6)



Quick Clues:

Across

4. An attendant (7)
8. Accustomed (6)
9. Mysterious (7)
10. Dried grape (6)
11. Easement (6)
12. Break (8)
18. Unmindful (8)
20. For each (6)
21. Interior (6)
22. Think true (7)
23. Leave off (6)
24. Brittle (7)

Down

1. Diaphragm (7)
2. Melodious (7)
3. Portray (6)
5. Real (8)
6. Subject to (6)
7. Delicate (6)
13. Vast change (8)
14. Shortfall (7)
15. Views (7)
16. Seem (6)
17. Vision (6)
19. A meal (6)

Sudoku

			3	8	7			9
		9	5		1	2		
8								5
7		8				9		4
	1			4	3		5	
4		6				3		2
5			8					3
		4	1		5	6		
			4	7	9			

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:

9	2	4	1	8	5	7	6	3
1	6	3	2	4	7	8	9	5
5	8	7	9	3	6	4	2	1
2	7	9	4	1	3	6	5	8
3	4	8	5	6	9	2	1	7
6	1	5	8	7	2	3	4	9
8	5	6	7	2	1	9	3	4
7	9	2	3	5	4	1	8	6
4	3	1	6	9	8	5	7	2

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Small change; 9 Hip; 10 Went to sea; 11 Roods; 13 Rush mat; 14 Affair; 16 Sexton; 18 Sent out; 19 Paris; 20 Editorial; 21 Leo; 22 Rest assured. Down: 2 Map; 3 Lawns; 4 Centre; 5 Artiste; 6 Gasometer; 7 Sharp answer; 8 Parting shot; 12 Offensive; 15 Iron out; 17 Stairs; 19 Pilau; 21 Lee.
QUICK - Across: 1 Substantial; 9 Rye; 10 Attention; 11 Fleet; 13 Emanate; 14 Choice; 16 Advise; 18 Emulate; 19 Toned; 20 Constrain; 21 Fen; 22 Depredatory.
Down: 2 Use; 3 Scant; 4 Anthem; 5 Tankard; 6 Agitation; 7 Proficiency; 8 Independent; 12 Eloquence; 15 Chatter; 17 Regard; 19 Tenet; 21 Far.

Quiz

1. In which ocean did the mutiny on the Bounty take place?
2. What type of animal is a marmoset?
3. Which religion is divided between the Digambaras and the Svetambaras?
4. In which country is the Grande Dixence Dam?
5. Of which country is Cape York Peninsula the most northerly mainland point?
6. Of which rodent is the guinea pig a species?
7. Which town is the administrative centre of Cornwall?
8. What do we call the biennial Pastinaca sativa?
9. Who is best known as the author of the Doctor books?
10. The troy pound is used for weighing what?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Anthony Blunt; 2 South American tree; 3 Camel; 4 Uranus; 5 Spain; 6 Sinbad; 7 Oregon; 8 Laurel; 9 7 million pounds; 10 Mars.

Niner: SHIPBOARD

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

84669126 gives a poet,
43728 gives a second poet,
573826 gives a third poet.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Why The Restaurant is a safe bet

IF you felt peckish in a casino a few years ago, you were faced with two choices, cheese toastie or a sandwich.

If you were lucky it may have been accompanied by a limp wet salad garnish. And you probably had to wait between 30 to 45 minutes to get the attention of one of the two waitresses tasked with serving drinks on the floor to the big gamblers.

And when you did make awkward eye contact, you were charged £2.50 for the privilege of receiving two heavily buttered white slices of nothingness.

Boy, how things have changed… casinos today are as much about food, shopping and entertainment as they are about the gambling… and Birmingham's Broadway Casino is no different.

THRIVING

Nestled away in the popular Broadway Plaza, the casino has been a thriving venue for many years, often attracting some of the world's biggest names in poker during its special festivals.

For first timers, the set up may seem intimidating as you're met outside by two doormen, before showing your ID in order to gain entry through the barrier.

But once you're in, the sheer size and elegance of the building blows you away. A huge private bar on the left, plush sofas to recline on and take a break from the action and of course plenty of casino tables, offering a host of different games.

I am all too familiar with the layout having enjoyed plenty of nights of Texas Hold'em over the years, but I was very intrigued to try out the new Italian restaurant, ironically called 'The Restaurant'.

This new reboot replaced a slightly strange Chinese/Italian/Indian and Thai fusion restaurant called Mirage, that offered plenty of options without really having a true identity. That cannot be said of 'The Restaurant,' whose mission statement promised 'a taste of Italy renowned for its fresh ingredients and rustic meals'.

Toasted bread with garlic, chopped tomato and basil

Try The Restaurant at Broadway Casino

The menu was a breath of fresh air, no more Caesar salad followed by tandoori chicken or Vietnamese noodles – this was crisp, elegant and most important of all, simple.

The best Italian food is simple, the freshness of the ingredients are there to speak for themselves.

Prices appeared very reasonable and nobody will not be disappointed with the selections on offer.

I decided on the 'Bruschetta Basilico,' which to you and me is toasted bread, with garlic, chopped tomatoes and basil. The dish was served by an authentic Italian named Roberto, who I came to learn was the manager of the restaurant.

Happily done I awaited my main dish of the evening, the sea bass. Yes, I could have gone a little more indulgent, but I wanted to see exactly how they executed a delicate piece of fish on a busy Friday night.

When it arrived, I was not disappointed. Visually stunning, their presentation was spot on and I was delighted they showcased the whole fish rather than two boneless fillets that often look pretty sad on the plate.

Roberto (full name Roberto Santolamazza) hails from Rome. No fake Italian accent here, he was the real deal and his warmth and passion for the food made the experience all the better.

I was too full to have a dessert , but the plates flying out on the other tables looked sublime.

I will certainly be returning and the best thing about leaving is that you can win your meal on the way out!

NATHAN JUDAH

PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Well-presented semi-detached in a popular location

A considerably improved and extended traditional style semi-detached house, 26 Old Park Road, Dudley, is in a popular and convenient locality between Sedgley and Dudley, being within close proximity of a wide range of amenities.

The property is well presented and has well proportioned accommodation with majority gas central heating and double glazing. There is ample parking on the block paved driveway to the front and a good sized, easily maintained rear garden.

It is for sale through Wakeman at £149,950 with no chain.

In more detail the entrance hall has laminate flooring and under-stairs storage.

The through living room has two separate living areas. The front living area has a modern fireplace with a living flame gas fire, a bay window and laminate flooring. The rear living area has a patio door and laminate flooring.

The kitchen has been extended. It has an extensive range of units and a built-in double oven, gas hob and a cooker hood, part tiled walls, provision for a washing machine and a dishwasher.

Upstairs, bedroom one overlooks the frontage through a bay window.

Bedroom two overlooks the rear and bedroom three overlooks the front.

Having a white suite, the bathroom has a panelled bath, an electric shower, a pedestal wash hand basin and low level WC, a chrome towel rail style radiator, an extractor fan and built-in cupboards over the wash hand basin.

Outside, a block paved driveway enables ample off-street parking, bordered by shrub beds. A gated to the side leads to the good sized rear garden. This features a slabbed patio area, a gravelled area, timber decking and a further slabbed area.

DUDLEY £149,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Wakeman
TEL: 01384 459999
EMAIL: dudley@wakeman-

KEY FEATURES

- Traditional semi-detached
- Popular location
- Well presented
- 3 bedrooms
- No chain

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auctioneers

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Hartlebury Village, Worcs DY11 7YE

An opportunity to breathe life back into this non-Listed historic Mill House, to be sold for the first time in over 40 years! - a very large detached village Period property extending to over 5,000 sq.ft. with APPROX 2.3 ACRES including paddock land to front & water gardens plus a water wheel, in idyllic & sheltered valley setting. Requiring complete modernisation with huge potential. EPC G

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £450,000 - £550,000

Lakeside Barn, Hartlebury DY11 7YE

A very special brick built lake-side barn for development in Hartlebury! - having **full Planning Permission for conversion** and no near neighbours, with **ABOUT 3.4 ACRES** including it's own private lake, in a scene reminiscent of an oil painting! Here is a mesmerising "grand designs" style opportunity in a blissful setting yet only 10 miles from Worcester City Centre and the M5. A truly "County Class" position, both micro environmentally and geographically.

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £300,000 - £400,000

Trimpley Lane, Bewdley DY12 1RL

Wescott, Trimpley Lane, Shatterford - a substantial detached bungalow with incredible further potential standing well on verdant open gardens and grounds, extending to APPROXIMATELY 3.539 ACRES, ideal for the keeping of recreational horses subject to requisite Consents. Immense further potential. EPC E

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £325,000 - £375,000

Patchetts Lane, Bewdley DY12 2DA

A sensationally positioned three bedroom detached bungalow in the upper reaches of Bewdley town for re-modelling or complete replacement subject to consent! Witchthorn sits on a plateau, central to a 0.429 of an Acre garden plot which really begs for a 'high tech' imaginative property to captivate the gorgeous expansive valley views! Sky High potential. EPC D

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £250,000 - £350,000

Rock Cross, K'minster DY14 9SF

"Overwood", Rock To be sold under the hammer on behalf of Executors to close an Estate! A traditional detached bungalow for refurbishment/re-development standing well on an excellent level plot of HALF AN ACRE captivating awe inspiring grandstand views to the front! Incredible further potential. EPC TBC

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £250,000 - £350,000

Lea Bank Av. K'minster DY11 6PD

An opportunity to purchase a unique detached two bedroom bungalow located on the Bewdley side of Kidderminster. Porch. Reception Hall. Lounge. Breakfasting Dining Kitchen. Two double Bedrooms. Bathroom. Garage. Fore and rear gardens. Planning Permission applied for to extend into the substantial loft area. An early inspection is recommended. EPC E

KIDDERMINSTER OFFICE 01562 822244

Guide Price £150,000 - £160,000

Horsefair, Kidderminster DY10 2EN

Under Instructions From The Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust (WBPT)
Virtual walk-through tour available. An iconic newly renovated Grade II Listed end terrace cottage with parking, ideal for both owner occupiers and landlords as a profitable no hassle 'turn-key' investment. Buy with full peace of mind with a long life Construction Industry Council Collateral Warranty which is in force until April 2029. Freehold.

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £105,000 - £125,000

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STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £110,000 - £130,000

Load Street, Bewdley DY12 2AS

A spacious third/top floor one-bedroom flat right in the centre of Bewdley, with vaulted ceilings and elaborate beams together with interesting views to all sides! Great as a lock up and leave bolt-hole or as a profitable "turn key" investment property. Spacious, well maintained and with immediate vacant possession. Leasehold for 71 years remaining. EPC D

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Viewing via Joint Selling Agents Eden Estates of Bewdley 01299 402392

Guide Price £60,000 - £70,000

Church Av. Stourport DY13 9DX

Main photo shows rear elevation of the development and the subject property can be seen second from the left on the top floor - a newly re-decorated second floor one-bedroom flat with a south facing living room/balcony and GARAGE, in this popular canal-side development. Leasehold with 55 unexpired years remaining. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC E

STOURPORT OFFICE 01299 822060

Guide Price £55,000 - £65,000

31 Worcester St. Kidderminster Worcs DY10 1EQ Tel: **01562 822244**
Fax: 01562 825401 email: sales@phippsandpritchard.co.uk

1 High St. Stourport on Severn Worcs DY13 8DJ Tel: **01299 822060**
Fax: 01299 827066 email: stourport@phippsandpritchard.co.uk

To infinity and far beyond in headturner from Infiniti

By Andy Richardson

"Who made this car?"

A couple of fellas were walking through the park. They'd approached Infiniti Q50 – aka The Beast – slowly, like hunters stalking deer. They'd marvelled at its admirable grill, discreetly wondering whether they might smash open their pension pots and blow them on the sleek, black, Panther-esque lines.

And then they'd walked along its flanks, surreptitiously steeling a glance of the elongated bodywork, like men stealing a glance of the prettiest girl at the bar. When they reached the bumper, they stopped, pretending their dog had found something interesting in the grass, but all the while training their eyes on The Beast's ample booty.

"Who made it?" they asked, when I appeared from the driver's side.

I wanted to say 'a robot in Sunderland', but that would have seemed churlish. So I said Nissan. Nissan? Get that. The company that used to make the Datsun Cherry.

They did a double take, imagining I'd got it wrong and that The Beast was, in fact, by a German or American manufacturer. But, no, Nissan it was. The Japanese automotive manufacturer has a luxury brand – in much the same way that Lexus and Toyota are bound at the hip. And it competes with German rivals from BMW and Mercedes Benz in the luxury end of the market.

The curves certainly look Germanic. Sleek and confident, they make an instant impression. And the things that go on under the bonnet are equally enjoyable, making the Q50 a dream.

It's a car that fits into the UK's lucrative prestige saloon market, alongside the Audi A4, BMW 3-series and Mercedes C-class. It's fun to drive – slip it into Sport+ and it shoots out of the traces like an underfed greyhound chasing an overfed hare. The rev counter rises faster than a rocket on Bonfire Night as it tears up the road, chewing tarmac like Augustus Gloop with a chocolate bar – or, more accurately, hitting 0-60 in 5.1 seconds.

Knock it down to Eco, to save both polar bears and the time spent at the filling station, and it still offers knock-your-socks-off acceleration while offering decent economy at 42.2 mpg. Happy Days; Q50 is a fast car with a 3-litre engine that doesn't melt the Larsen C Ice Shelf into hundreds of tiny icebergs.

The curves make the car sleek and confident

The technology is responsive and puts the fun into long journeys. A multimedia pack offers an Infiniti navigation system with traffic information and DAB. Bluetooth, a voice recognition system and a visibility pack that offers something smart called Around View Monitor – with moving object detection and parking guidance – makes it feel as though there's a co-pilot looking out for you on every mile of the road.

The infotainment package provides similar levels of luxury, with Bluetooth audio streaming, a BOSE Premium audio system, 14-speaker sound system, Active Noise Control and the normal USB/iPod connectivity, with an additional AUX-in RCA.

Safety and security were top of the list when the boffins at Q50 HQ were designing their dirty black beast of a car. Opposed calliper sport brakes provide reassuring security hwile the A50 is fitted with six airbags, a hill start assist, an inbuilt tyre pressure monitoring system, auto dimming rear view mirror and vehicle security system with engine immobiliser. Then there's a blind spot warning system, lane departure prevention, predictive forward collision warning and distance control assistance.

All of which makes the Infiniti Q50 an empowering drive that combines power with precision, subtlety with style, comfort with out-and-out grunt. With supermodel looks and Silicon Valley-esque technology, it's a power-punching all-rounder that dukes it out with its more illustrious peers in a reasonably prestigious category.

The fellas in the park had never seen anything like it. But, judging by their questions about price, performance and the location of the nearest dealership, at least one was thinking of seeing a lot more of it.

Prepare well before getting in the car

Where the children are number one

The summer holidays are here and many families will be packing for success as they set off to enjoy and travel. These tips give advice on driving with children from IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman.

Be patient.

Sometimes children can drive parents potty but it is important to remain calm and keep them entertained. Playing games whilst travelling and keeping them occupied is always a recipe for success Make sure all their tech is working before you set off. A flat battery on a phone can be major disaster for today's connected kids

Pack for success.

Make sure you have a food bag with goodies for the best behaved but avoid too much sugar. Fruit and water are best. Also carry wet wipes and spare clothes that are easy to access within the car The right car seat will keep your child safe and comfortable. Check out the Good Egg guide http://www.goodeggcarsafety.com/ for the latest information

Know your journey.

The worst thing is being lost with a grumpy child in the back. Know the correct stop-off points so you know when you can take breaks, so the children can get out and stretch their legs . Children need regular stops – never go more than two hours without a stop. For very young babies too long in a car seat can be stressful, so factor this in when you plan your journey

Set off early.

Travelling long distances with little ones can be nightmare. If you set off early and take your time as opposed to rushing to your destination the journey will be miles smoother. But, remember driving when you would normally be asleep is a risk factor, so make sure you are fully awake by taking frequent breaks and sharing the driving

Official stopping distances queried by safety charity

Official stopping distances listed in the Highway Code are inaccurate, a road safety charity has claimed.

Brake has published research that suggests official figures for stopping distances underestimate the reaction times of drivers.

Conducted by the Transport Research Laboratory on behalf of the charity, the research showed that the average thinking time for motorists to respond to emergency situations is 1.5 seconds — more than twice the 0.67 seconds the Highway Code sets out.

As a result, the average total stopping distance — including thinking and braking distance — is 34 metres at 30mph, 11 metres further than stated in the Highway Code.

Jason Wakeford, spokesman for Brake, said: "These figures suggest stopping distances taught to new drivers in the Highway Code fall woefully short.

"Even though car braking technology has improved in recent years, the majority of the overall stopping distance at most speeds is actually made up of the time taken to perceive the hazard and react. The research shows that average thinking time is more than double that set out in the Highway Code."

A true understanding of how long it takes to stop a car in an emergency is one of the most important lessons for new drivers. Understanding true average thinking time reminds all drivers how far their car will travel before they begin to brake – as well as highlighting how any distraction in the car which extends this time, like using a mobile phone, could prove fatal.

"Brake is calling on the Government to increase the stopping distances in the Highway Code as a matter of urgency."

In response, a Department for Transport spokesperson said: "We have some of the safest roads in the world and we are always looking at ways to make them safer.

"Stopping distances in the Highway Code are intended to inform motorists of the thinking and braking time needed to stop a vehicle at different speeds. We will carefully consider these findings."

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Stourbridge Chronicle Thursday, August 3, 2017

Skoda fuels fleet with new engines

By James Parker

Škoda UK has launched petrol engine variants of the highly popular Octavia and Superb SE Tech models for fleet customers. Cost, practicality and safety are key components in the make-up of the models, designed with business customers in mind even though the future of diesel and petrol is still unsure.

Fleet customers now have the option of petrol engines for both SE Tech hatch and estate models in the multi-award winning Octavia and Superb. The new generation direct-injection turbocharged TSI petrol engines offer drivers refinement, performance and flexibility, resulting in a quiet, fuel-efficient and dynamic drive, ideal for high-speed motorways or country and town roads.

The popular Octavia estate 1.0 TSI 115PS DSG uses a seven speed automatic gearbox, which enables it to achieve up to 65.7 mpg on the combined cycle and 108 g/km CO2 with enough power to deliver 0-62 mph in just 10.2 seconds. The estate model offers low p11d values starting from £20,755 with a BIK rate of 23%. Also available is the 1.4 TSI 150PS with manual and DSG gearbox. From 26 July, an all-new 1.5 litre engine featuring active cylinder technology (ACT) will join the line-up and will be available with a manual gearbox and offer p11d values starting at just £19,615 for the hatch and £20,815 for the estate. The DSG version will be introduced in the Autumn.

The Škoda Superb is available with a 1.4 TSI engine that delivers an impressive 150PS and achieves 0-62mph in less than nine seconds. Performance and practicality are combined with privacy glass and a leather and Alcantara interior, and the estate boasts a class-leading 660 litre boot space (1,950 litres with the seats down).

Octavia petrol Se Tech

Henry Williams, Škoda head of fleet, said: "We have added petrol engines to the Škoda fleet range due to increasing demand from customers. Octavia and Superb already offer a formidable package and by adding even more choice we are demonstrating our commitment to respond to the changing market and the needs of our customers."

Both Superb and Octavia are the perfect companions for business, combining useful tech and the spacious interior that is synonymous with the Škoda model line-up. Each features an 8-inch touchscreen navigation system as standard and the inclusion of SmartLink+ which links to both Apple CarPlayTM and Android AutoTM, plus a MAXI-Dot Trip computer system, to bring the office on the road with you.

For peace of mind for drivers and fleet managers, the new Octavia offers a range of driver assist systems as standard to optimise driving efficiency and safety. Features include Front assist, which uses radar technology to monitor distances from the vehicle in front and will automatically slow the car down if it detects a possible collision. Front assist with pedestrian protection also warns the driver when a pedestrian attempts to dangerously cross the path of car, and will emit a combined audio and visual signal as well as a gentle jolt of the brakes to keep both parties safe.

Superb saloon and estate petrol SE Tech

As well as a class-leading boot space of 1,580 litres (hatch) with the seats down (590 with seats up) the new Octavia features LED daytime running lights, front and rear parking sensors, and adaptive cruise control – ideal to maintain efficiency on longer journeys.

The Škoda Superb's award-winning design boasts technical sophistication too, with Wi-Fi and phone signal booster to keep drivers synced with their business whilst on the road, as well as a multifunctional steering wheel that connects to the 8-inch touch screen infotainment system. To make life even easier, additional features include, umbrellas in both front doors and keyless entry. To help keep drivers alert and safe on the road, Superb offers Blind Spot Detection as well as Smart Light Assist, which enables the driver to see further ahead when driving in the dark and alerts to any upcoming obstacles. Traffic Jam assist uses sensors to detect your surroundings and automatically aligns you to the centre of the lane and assists in braking when traffic is slowing down or comes to a stop in front of you.

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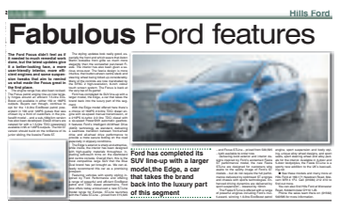

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religious notices

christadelphian

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1 Family

elderly & disabled

RISE AND recline chair, Sherbourne, good condition, purchaser to collect, cost £700, sell £250. 01902 338703.

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

2 Leisure Time

boats & water sports

MIRACLE DINGHY. Full set of sails, combi trailer, boat cover. Good condition. £600. 01384 296292.

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SOLD.

BRADCOTT ASPIRE Midi porch awning, charcoal colour, 3.4m x 2.4m, used twice, excellent condition, £220. 07970 841177.

HYMER SWING 530, 2004, very good condition, fully serviced, £5,500. Awning at extra cost. 07714 952043 or 07813 341447.

NEAR BEWDLEY
Park home, 50 x 20, Tingdene, large twin, 11 month park. On bus route, great views.
£95,000.
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STATIC CARAVAN Mid Wales. 32ft x 10ft. £2,500.
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STATIC CARAVAN
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2 bedroom, overlooking the River Severn, with steam railway on site, good fishing, pub on site.
Residential or holiday, 52 week site. Situated at Hampton Loade, Bridgnorth.
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2 BED STATIC CARAVAN for sale on Seaside holiday park Borth. Full 12 month season, great facilities. Pet friendly, wi-fi. £10,995. Paul 07960 944721 or 01970 871933.

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camping equipment

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Total new £1,200. £900 ono.
07720 071528.

music shop

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Guitar flight case, £50.
Telephone 01902 746691.

ticket

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holidays

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antique fairs

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markets

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3 Home & Services

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BEATLES LP wanted, Please Please Me, original, black and gold label, record and sleeve must be mint will pay £500. 07944 642039.

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4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

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guns & dogs

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pets corner

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Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

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5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

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6 Property

accommodation to let

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12 months MoT,
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Cheap to run.
£1,600
07988 273136.

BARGAIN

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Low mileage MoT.
£1,695.
07940 150540.

MUST BE SEEN

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56 reg,
second owner from new,
69,000 miles, FSH,
MoT 6 months,
aircon.
£2,195 ono
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01902 428190.

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£2,395.
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2009, panoramic glass sunroof, comand sat nav, memory package, 17ins alloys, 6 disc CD/ DVD changer, 130k with FSH,
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£2,999 ono
01902858958

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£2,800
07940 198062.

MUST BE SEEN

VOLVO S60 D5 SE
54 reg, metallic,
leather heated electric seats,
xenon lights,
premium sound, 6CD,
60,000 miles from new,
one owner,
immaculate.
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01902 380424.

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FORD ESCORT 1.6LX
N Reg.,
low mileage,
long MoT,
two owners,
full electrics,
good condition.
£265
07905 512032.

HYUNDAI GETZ
2007, 48,890 Miles, black, abs, electric windows, air bag, air con, alarm, MoT, long MoT, central locking, pas, tax, Stereo, CD
£850 ono
07504 301925.

BARGAIN

MINI CONVERTIBLE
54 Reg.,
blue, 1600cc,
full MoT.
Good condition,
£1,450.
07527 031128.

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BARGAIN

NISSAN MICRA
998 cc, automatic, pas, CD, long MoT, 80k, 1996, P reg,
£325.
07818 498054.

MUST BE SEEN

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2005, 5dr hatchback.
2 lady owners from new.
full MoT, recently serviced.
Service history.
Immaculate condition.
£1,950.
07780 333067.

classic cars

WANTED, CLASSIC Car. Private cash buyer. Any condition, anything considered.
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commercial vehicles

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scrap vehicles

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A BETTER PRICE
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anytime

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

ROBERT HEDLEY MARSH (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 2 Elm Grove Kinver DY7 6JG, who died on 09/06/2017, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 06/10/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
THURSFIELDS SOLICITORS
14 Church Street Kidderminster
Worcs DY10 2AH
T507625

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NOTICE OF CONFIRMATION OF AN ORDER
PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER
HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981
STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO 7 (PART), 8 AND 9 (PART) SWINDON PARISH)
PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2017

On 22 June 2017 Staffordshire County Council confirmed the above Order made under section 119 of the Highways Act 1980, which diverted that length of Public Footpath No 7 Swindon Parish running from grid reference 387049 289946 in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 194 metres to grid reference 387231 289874; to a new line running from grid reference 387049 289946 and heading in a generally southerly direction for approximately 16 metres before turning to head in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 136 metres to grid reference 387185 289904 before heading in a generally north easterly direction for approximately 148 metres to its junction with the new route of Public Footpath No 9 Swindon at grid reference 387313 289981. Also, that length of Public Footpath No 8 Swindon Parish running from its junction with Public Footpath No 9 Swindon at grid reference 387340 289963 in a generally southerly direction for approximately 25 metres to grid reference 387343 289940; to a new line running from its new junction with Public Footpath No 9 Swindon at grid reference 387344 289977 in a generally south south-westerly direction for approximately 43 metres before heading in a generally south south-easterly direction for approximately 13 metres to grid reference 387337 289924. Also, that length of Public Footpath No 9 Swindon Parish running from grid reference 387140 289966 in a generally easterly direction for approximately 252 metres to grid reference 387394 289970; to a new line running from grid reference 387140 289966 in a generally east north-easterly direction for approximately 86 metres to grid reference 387221 290002 before heading in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 178 metres to grid reference 387394 289970.

A copy of the Order and Order maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at South Staffordshire Council Offices, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, Staffordshire, WV8 1PX during normal opening hours and at the offices of Staffordshire County Council, Corporate Reception, 1 Staffordshire Place, Stafford, Monday to Thursday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm and Friday 8.30 am to 4.30 pm. Copies of the Orders and maps may be bought there at the price of 10p per A4 page; £2 per map.

The Order comes into force on ***15 September 2017*** but if a person aggrieved by the order wishes to question its validity, or that of any provision contained in it, on the ground that it is not within the powers of the Highways Act 1980, as amended, or on the ground that any requirement of the Act, as amended, or of any regulation made under the Act, had not been complied with in relation to the Order he or she may, under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Act, as applied by paragraph 5 of Schedule 6 to the Act, within six weeks from the date of publication of this notice, make an application to the High Court.

John Tradewell, Director of Strategy, Governance and Change
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Dated: 3 August 2017

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Former England captain Ted Dexter is now a member of the club after moving to the area

Captain David Barnes (standing) looks on from the balcony at Lord's during the 1973 National Knockout final

Wolverhampton Cricket Club captain James Hammond

The impressive new net facility at Danescourt

Pushing the boundaries to get city into cricket

SPORTING FEATURE

By Tim Spiers

IT may be a well-worn cliché but in this case it's certainly apt – James Hammond wants to put Wolverhampton cricket on the map.

The sport may trail behind football, speedway and boxing for the city's affections.

But Hammond, captain of Wolverhampton Cricket Club, believes the interest is there – and he's keen for his club to exploit it.

A £60,000 makeover of the club's Danescourt Road ground in Tettenhall will certainly help. The picturesque ground boasts new nets and covers, of county cricket standard, for the players, while fans can watch the action from a charming decking area.

You might even find yourself sitting next to former England captain Ted Dexter who, aged 82, has recently moved to Wolverhampton from his home in France to be nearer to his family and has become a club member.

Excellent

Next up, Hammond hopes, will be positive results on the pitch.

A run to the quarter-finals of the National Knockout has helped create a buzz around Danescourt as the current side bid to emulate the legendary Wolverhampton sides of 1973 and 1999 who lifted club cricket's most prestigious trophy on never-to-be-forgotten days at Lord's.

Wolverhampton beat The Mote from Kent in their first appearance at the home of cricket and then overcame Middlesex outfit Teddington in 1999.

A home tie with Ockbrook & Borrowash now awaits on August 6 and Hammond, who bagged five wickets in the last 16 victory over Bootle, is hoping it will capture the attention of the city's cricket fans.

"We just need to get more people to come and watch us now," he said. "Results will help, people want to see a winning side.

"The new facilities are excellent. With the covers, we'd have eight or nine games called off per season before, but now it's three or four.

"There's so much space here and we've got the capacity for another 100, 200, 300 people.

"We've got to create that buzz, especially on social media and things like that which we're trying to push and promote more."

> ***"We've got to create that buzz, especially on social media and things like that which we're trying to push and promote more."***

While 62-times-capped legend Dexter is a very welcome addition to the Wolverhampton ranks, it's future legends that the club wants to produce more than anything.

That said, they've helped nurture their fair share of county players in recent years, as 25-year-old Hammond is keen to point out. "We've got Ted here through connections, which is great," he added. "Dave Lycett and Chris Bowyer have done a great job fundraising and promoting the club on the social side of things, holding a lot of things in the winter as you need to create that revenue for 12 months.

Vikram Solanki, ex-Wolverhampton, in England colours

"To have Ted here is lovely. Wine and cheese nights – not many clubs will be doing that! It can only help boost our exposure.

"We've also got, hopefully, a few future legends. We've had a lot of pros who've come through the ranks – I can't name other clubs who've produced the number of first class cricketers that we have."

In the last 15 or 20 years the likes of current Worcestershire player Tom Fell and Vikram Solanki, who also played for the county and represented England, have played through the age groups to adult cricket at Wolverhampton.

Toughest

Aneesh Kapil and Chris Russell, two more former Worcestershire players, have also played for the club.

Hammond added: "And Birmingham League Cricket is a great place to play your cricket. It's one of the toughest leagues in the country.

"Plus there's been a raft of overseas players that have come and gone and a few more young stars before my time."

In the most urban of cities, situated in the football hotbed that is the Black Country, it can be hard for local cricket to get the exposure it deserves.

Hammond believes more competitions between local clubs could help attract interest – and maybe see Wolverhampton Cricket Club competing with Wolves, or Wolverhampton Speedway, for the city spotlight.

"It's not just us, there are so many good small clubs in the area," he said.

"We should brings those games back because we don't play half the sides anymore.

"We might play Himley occasionally but we don't play Fordhouses, Penn, Wightwick & Finchfield or Codsall as much as we should. There's the Black Country T20 week but a cup organised with more local teams would be good.

"You associate Wolverhampton with football, speedway and maybe boxing, but the interest in cricket is up there."

Sykes back on track after Welsh success

STOURBRIDGE rally driver Richard Sykes heads into the Tyneside stages of British Rally Championship this weekend on the back of two successful days on the Nicky Grist Stages event in Wales.

Sykes finished first two wheel drive car on the first day and second on day two in his Batham's Brewery, G I Sykes Ltd, The Body Clinic, Staniland Marina and Summit Platforms-supported Citroën DS3 R3.

Sykes has had a relatively quiet year so far with his season not starting until the Somerset Stages in April. He was leading the "Silver Star" category for two wheel drive cars until he hit a rock which holed the radiator, forcing him into retirement. He had better luck on the Carlisle Stages in Cumbria, finishing joint first and only losing maximum points on a tie-break due to the other driver being quicker on the opening stage.

Next up is the Tyneside Stages which held on the Otterburn ranges in Northumberland on Sunday followed by an event at Donington Park and then two more Silver Star rallies, the Woodpecker and Trackrod Stages.

Gazza returns to the region for Q&A night

PAUL Gascoigne is set to return to the West Midlands later next month for a live question and answer session.

The former England star will take the stage at The H Suite in Birmingham on September 15 to tell the story of the highs and lows of his football career and beyond.

It marks Gazza's first appearance on stage in the region since his infamous 2015 show at Wolverhampton Civic Hall, which resulted in a court appearance after he admitted making a racist comment to a security guard.

The event, which is being put on by Wolverhampton-based promoters Showfighter UK, also offers meet and greet opportunities with Gazza and features a meal and a memorabilia auction.

Showfighter UK director Andy Sahota said: "Our Three Lions-themed evening will be a celebration of one of England's most iconic footballers."

Further details and tickets are available at www.showfighter.co.uk/events

Rutter is back on superbikes podium

BRIERLEY Hill-born Michael Rutter returned to the circuits after another successful stint on the roads in Finland to secure two more podiums in the National Superstock 1000 Championship.

The 45-year-old rider claimed two seconds and a fourth on the Bathams/SMT Racing BMW at Brands Hatch. It means Danny Buchan still leads the championship from Richard Cooper with Rutter maintaining third place, 13.5 points clear of Chrissy Rouse.

Meanwhile, Kurt Wigley, 21, from Hednesford, brought his Sorrymate.com Yamaha home in 11th and 12th places in the British Supersport series to sit 15th in the championship.

Twin brother Matt had an operation last week to cement his crushed vertebrae following a bad crash in the National Superstock 1000 class and is on the mend – and says he is 'looking forward to returning'.

The British Superbike support classes now head to Thruxton, in Hampshire, for round seven this weekend, from tomorow (Friday) to Sunday.

Sport

How's that for getting cricket club on the map?
Page 39

Play-off bid for Heathens suffers blow

CRADLEY'S National League play-off hopes were dealt a big blow as they were well beaten 56-34 by fellow top four hopefuls Kent on Monday night.

The Motor Market Heathens were forced to track an understrength side with new signing Richard Hall unavailable and Tyler Govier missing due to last minute work commitments. And despite a valiant effort from top two Tom Perry and Danny Ayres, the Heathens' lower order struggled to make any impact.

Former Kent man Ayres piled the pressure on the hosts' guest No.1 Ben Morley but was forced to settle for second and split the home duo.

Heat two saw further disappointment for the Heathens as 15-year-old Anders Rowe, who was lined-up for a team spot at Cradley for the 2017 season, rode a remarkable race from a 15-metre handicap to work his way past Conor Dwyer and then guest Heathens reserve Alex Spooner, to join his team-mate out front for a 5-1 as the visitors fell six behind.

Three heat wins out of four races from Perry seemed to get the visitors back into contention at 19-17.

But the Heathens fell apart and were unable to compete with a dominant Kent side on their home circuit. Cradley conceded seven heat advantages out of the next eight races and the meeting was well put to bed by the time Ayres and Perry landed a final race 5-1.

KENT 56: Anders Rowe 11+3, George Hunter 11+2, Ben Morley 11, Ben Hopwood 11, Jack Thomas 7, Bradley Andrews 5+4, Nathan Stoneman R/R.
CRADLEY 34: Tom Perry 14+1, Danny Ayres 12, Conor Dwyer 3, Alex Spooner 3, Joe Lawlor 2, Luke Harris 0, Dan Greenwood R/R.

Hopes of county are pinned on debutant Norman

IT was a quiet weekend for athletes from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club with only one solitary member pinning on a number and racing.

But it wasn't the two-tone blue hooped vest the number was being pinned to. Instead it was the royal blue vest with the single yellow band of Shropshire.

Dave Norman pulled on the county colours to race in the Meerbrook 15k, a race including an inter-counties competition between Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, North Wales and Shropshire.

It was a tough county debut for the DK runner with the first two miles climbing up Gunn Hill, an incline often used on cycling's Tour Of Britain to decide King of the Mountains points. After a long undulating loop through the Staffordshire Moorlands countryside the course plummeted down that same hill to the finish giving runners the opportunity to make up for lost time going in the opposite direction some time earlier.

Finishing with a fair old rattle down that last hill Norman crossed the line in 1.04.43 to claim 50th position in a field approaching 400.

Baker out to Kane rival before Benn bout

Kane Baker fights at The Venue on Saturday

KANE Baker steps into the ring in Dudley this weekend ahead of a bout against Nigel Benn's son Conor next month.

Baker, from Bartley Green, accepted the bout at short notice for the 02 Arena in London on July 1. The two welterweights were prevented from getting it on, though, when the British Boxing Board of Control discovered Baker's medical clearance had expired. Benn, aged just 20, instead halted southpaw Michael Cole, who stepped in with a day to spare, by third round stoppage. Baker, 27, has undergone his annual medical since and passed with flying colours, so can box again.

But before the September 1 bout he takes on the rarely-stopped Qasim Hussain over four rounds at The Venue on Saturday.

Rowley Regis' Tyler Denny and Dudley's Les Byfield feature, while hot prospect Ekow Essuman will box in the Black Country for the first time as a professional. Another Brummie, Daryl Pearce, makes up the home corner. For tickets, at £35 and £50, call 07939 588 810.

TOSS DECISIVE FOR SKIPPER

STOURBRIDGE skipper Josh Banks kept his team's hopes of promotion from the Birmingham League division three alive by the flick of the coin.

Winning the toss he put Brewood in on an awful batting track. In all, 16 wickets went down for total of 103 runs and the match lasted just 40 overs instead of the 110 available.

A bowler's paradise, Zain Ul Hassan pocketed five wickets for two runs, Jitesh Jivan-Patel 3-21 and Jade Richter 2-24 as Brewood managed just 51. In reply, Stour themselves struggled to 45-6 off 15 overs, with Wade Lezar having taken 4-18.

Brewood skipper Richard Hewitt insisted surprisingly to call his team into tea despite Stour needing just five runs and Brewood needing four wickets for victory. The needless break enabled Stour to regroup and within just six balls, Dominic O'Reilly had taken his score to 20 off 18 balls– the highest individual score of the day – to see Stourbridge home.

Stour remain in fourth position on 199 points just 13 behind Saturday's opponents Lichfield.

Meanwhile, Himley's promotion push from Division One cranked up another notch with a four-wicket victory at Leamington.

Greg Wright's side have forced themselves into the top two and are now unbeaten in five as Chris Boroughs again starred with the ball, taking 5-25 as the hosts were all out for just 77. The Stourbridge-born seamer took his wicket tally for the season to 26.

Lower order Kris Green and Stuart Wedge got Himley over the line in 23 overs.

Halesowen ended Fordhouses' stint as division two leaders with an away victory. After the visitors elected to bat and were all-out for 177, the former table-toppers fell 35 runs short of their target, with opener Shoaib Akhtar's 21 the best they had to offer. In reply, Dylan Ross-Watt top scored for Halesowen with 50, while also taking 3-58 to dent Fordhouses' title hopes.

Baby boon for champ Whiley

Jordanne Whiley in action at Wimbledon where she won the wheelchair doubles

HALESOWEN wheelchair tennis star Jordanne Whiley has confirmed she won her fourth successive Wimbledon women's wheelchair doubles title while pregnant.

The 25-year-old teamed up with Japan's Yui Kamiji to win the title, and Whiley has since tweeted to announce her pregnancy with partner and coach Marc McCarroll. Whiley opened up about playing while pregnant, which Serena Williams also did in January when she won the Australian Open. "I thought, 'If we start trying in May I could still play Wimbledon, and it worked," she said. "But I had no idea how incredibly sick I'd be.

"At the French Open, I was really, really ill. I thought it was a stomach bug. Even the doctors thought it was a stomach bug. But by Wimbledon I was a little more prepared."

Pre-season ends with trip to Bulls

STOURBRIDGE FC round off their preparations for the 2017-18 season on Saturday with a trip to take on Southern League Premier title favourites Hereford FC at Edgar Street (kick-off 3pm).

The Glassboys have been invited to contest the Herefordshire FA Senior Invitational Cup against the home side, a trophy that dates back to the early 1950s.

Last Saturday, Gary Hackett's men suffered their first defeat in pre-season when they slipped to a 2-1 loss away at Alvechurch. Two successfully converted penalties by ex-Stour midfielder Tom Turton on 11 and 39 minutes, either side of an equalising goal from summer signing Jordan Murphy were enough to give the home side victory, but the Glassboys were forced to play the last 15 minutes a man short after substitute Aaron Forde was ordered off for showing dissent towards the referee.

Stourbridge will be selling season tickets and flexi-tickets for the new season from their club shop at the War Memorial Ground this Sunday, August 6, between 11am and 12.30pm.

Club officials have now confirmed that their opening league fixture at home to Matlock Town will be played on August 13, with a 3pm kick-off as there is cricket taking place at Amblecote the day before.

Monkton is placed among the top ten

BLACK Country Triathlete Ben Monkton travelled to Snowdonia to compete in the Snowman full distance triathlon which involved a 1km swim in Llyn Mymbyr at Plas y Brenin, a 70km ride through the heart of Snowdonia National Park, followed by a brutal 9km run with the first 3km gaining about 650m of ascent to the summit of Moel Siabod.

Monkton finished in an overall time of 3:44:36 and seventh overall.

Closer to home, at the Blithfield Sprint and Standard triathlon, Keith Bate came home first for the club in the sprint in 1:17:02, first in the over 60 age group. Oliver Evans finished third junior in 1:18:32 and Leigh-Ann Adams finished in 1:48:51. Edward Horgan completed the Standard distance race in 3:01:13, 25th Super Vet.

★★★

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